【英文卷】

COLLECTED WORKS ON TIBETOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

（藏学、人类学论文集）

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中国藏学出版社

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【现代中国藏学文库】

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

藏学、人类学论文集:英文/格勒著.—北京:中国藏学出版社,2008.9
(现代中国藏学文库)
ISBN 978-7-80253-046-1

Ⅰ.藏...　Ⅱ.格...　Ⅲ.①藏学-文集-英文②人类学-文集-英文
Ⅳ.K281.4-53　Q98-53

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2008)第 151827 号

藏学、人类学论文集(英文卷)

作　　者	格　勒
出版发行	中国藏学出版社
印　　刷	北京牛山世兴印刷厂
开　　本	787×1092 毫米　1/16
印　　张	19.5
字　　数	262 千
印　　次	2008 年 10 月第 1 版第 1 次印刷
印　　数	3000 册
书　　号	ISBN 978-7-80253-046-1/K·191

定　价:35.00 元

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PART 1

Tibetan Culture Research

A Brief Description of the Historical Relations between Ancient Tibetan Culture and the Chinese Culture

All the ethnic groups of China together have created Chinese culture as a whole over its long historical development. This rich and colourful culture now spread before our eyes is the result of the distinctive cultures of various ethnic groups gradually merging. Without cultural exchange and cross influence between the ethnic groups of China, there would be no such rich and colorful Chinese culture. The study of the origins, formation and development of all the ethnic groups of China would therefore be conducive to understanding the evolution of Chinese culture as a whole and the fundamental unity of its people.

The Tibetan ethnic group has both a long history and an inalienable membership of the Chinese nation. Archaeological data shows that the ancestors of the Tibetans labored, lived and flourished in the Qinghai-Tibeta Plateau, commonly known as "the roof of the world", as early as the Paleolithic Age. By the Tang Dynasty, about a thousand years ago, Tibetans already had a population of several million. They became a strong ethnic group or nation with a distinctive culture and customs. Ancient Chinese historical documents call the

region they inhabited "the Tubo Kingdom." Tubo was the strongest ethnic group on the western border of China around the eighth century.

Here is a question: why should such a strong ethnic group as the Tubo, who played a dominant role in Central Asia and Western China some one thousand years ago, always insists upon turning towards and joining the big family of the Chinese nation? In the modern history of Tibet, the hostile powers inside and outside China have colluded to try to split Tibet from China. Why do they always fail and why does the historical position of Tibet as an inalienable part of China not change? Of course we may answer this question on the basis of actual conditions that prevail now, from a legal point of view and so on, but I think it is more important to seek the roots. That is, to find out the historical origins of the situation that makes Tibet an inseparable part of China. So we shall seek reasonable and convincing answers from scientific and historical data on the relations between Tibetan and Chinese history and culture.

Therefore, I shall advance a comprehensive discussion on these relationships, using historical documents and the products of archaeology, philology, ethnology and physical anthropology. My purpose is to prove that the existence of Tibet as an inalienable part of China may trace back to antiquity. My paper is divided into two parts: in the first I shall point out that since the Neolithic Age, there have been three cultures and three main ethnic systems in China. The supreme level of these three main ancient ethnic cultures was the culture of the whole Chinese nation. This is to say that the historical origin of the Chinese culture was a unified culture of multi-origins. The second part is a discussion of the historical relationship between the Tibetan ancient culture and the three main ancient ethnic cultures which had existed from the Paleolithic Age to the later period of the

Neolithic Age in China.

I

The achievements of archaeological research in China have proved that in the Neolithic Age there were three main archaeological culture systems, i. e. the Yangshao culture system, the Qingliangang culture system, and the North Microlithic Culture system. A culture system is an inseparable organic whole formed by many similar cultural phenomena. For instance, the origin of Majiayao culture in Gansu and Qinghai provinces was the Yangshao culture. It is clear that these four cultures were parts of a whole system. Obviously such an archaeological culture system or entity was not the culture of a clan, or of a tribe, nor even of a tribal league. Neither was it the culture of a single ethnic group. It was the culture of a human community and people who were interrelated with each other and had common characteristics formed the community. We should also note that, although such an archaeological culture system was not of an ethnic group, it had ethnic characteristics. Let's take Qingliangang culture system as an example: (1) Its people had common territory, i. e. the lower reaches of the Yellow River and Huaihe rivers, the eastern coastline areas, the coastline of Bohai Gulf, and the southeast part of China. According to modern administrative divisions, it covered Shandong, Liaodong Peninsula, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Hubei, Hunan, Guizhou, eastern part of Yunnan, eastern part of Sichuan, Jiangxi, Anhui, and to the south of the Huaihe River. (2) They had a common economy to an extent, i. e. rice-growing, agricultural activities, pig-raising. (3) They had common customs and habits, i. e. living in bamboo huts built on stilts, hair-cutting and tattoos, artificial teeth-pulling and snake, dog,

bird and other animal worship.

These human communities were not equivalent to ethnic groups and neither are each of them of a single ethnic group, but instead they are comprised of a number of interrelated ethnic groups.

According to the data of archaeology, ethnology, philology, and physical anthropology, three main archaeological culture systems and three main ethnic systems already existed during the Neolithic Age in China.

1. The vast areas from the northeast along the Mongolian grassland to the northwest Ningxia, Gansu, Xinjiang and the north Tibetan Plateau are generally called the northern grassland region. Its landscape features are sand dunes, highlands and grasslands. The cultural characteristics of the Microlithic inhabitants were mainly small chipped stone tools. These people had the same characteristic features; their territories adjoined each other and in fact theirs was the culture of the ancient nomadic hunters on the northern grasslands, sand dunes, and highlands of China.

After the microlithic cultural system of the northern grassland came the appearance of bronzes with animal designs, commonly called "Ordus-type bronzes." A great many of them were horse harnesses and various weapons. Stone mound-shaped tombs like yurts were prevalent. Judging from archaeological materials, the ancient ethnic groups in the North China grassland were engaged in raising horses, cattle, sheep, but few pigs. They were horse tamers and inventors of horse carriages. They moved from place to place in search of water and grass in the northern pasturelands all year around. In order to suit the needs of a nomadic life, the features of their productive tools and articles for daily use were small and light. So, their stone implements were mainly small chipped stone tools; the bronzes were all portable articles.

According to ethnological materials, all the ethnic groups in the northern grassland regions of ancient China were called "Hu." History of the Han Dynasty says: "The Great Han is in the south, while the strong Hu in the north." Ci Hai, a lexicographical work, describes the following as Hu people:

Xiongnu(or Huns) people were called Hu or Beihu (Northern Hu).

The people of Wuhuan, and Xianbei, etc. were called Donghu (Eastern Hu).

As the ethnic groups inhabiting the Western Regions were to the west of the Xiongnu, they were generally called Xihu (Western Wu).

Rouran people originated from Nanxiongnu (Southern Xiongnu); Shanhu also originated from Nanxiongnu.

Qidan people originated from Donghu.

Linhu members were distributed in what is present-day Inner Mongol ever since the Warring States Period (475-221 BC).

Huhu people were distributed in the present-day Xinjiang.

Jihu people originated from Nanxiongnu.

Lushuihu people were a branch of Nanxiongnu.

Xiaoyueshi people were called "Yueshihu along the Huangshui River."

From this citation we may know that nearly all the so-called "Hu people" were ancient ethnic groups distributed in the present-day Northeast China, Inner-Mongolia, Gansu, Qinghai and Xinjiang. We call these ancient ethnic groups "Hu people."

The descendants of these ancient Hu people were the modern ethnic groups of the Altai language family. They include the Manchus, Koreans, Hezhes, Xibes, Mongols, Dongxiangs, Tus, Bonans, Daurs, Ewenkis, Oroqens, Uygurs, Kazaks, Kirgizs, Uzbeks, Salars, and Yugurs. The majority of these people are

distributed on the sand hill areas, grasslands, and highlands to the north of the Great Wall. They were mainly semi-nomadic hunters, but also practiced some agriculture.

The data from physical anthropology shows that two types of physiological features were distinguished in the period from the Neolithic Age to the Bronze Age. One was similar to the modern North Asian Mongoloid group, the other similar to the modern East Asian Mongoloid group. During the later period these two types of physiological features came to be mixed and unified. Chinese ancient documents recorded that the Hu had the features of "high noses and thick beards" or "high noses with deep eyes."

People in the northern grassland regions led a nomadic life. They lived in yurts (felt tents). They grew up on horsebacks and horses thus played an important part in their lives. Every one of them loved to prove his worth by showing good horsemanship and archery as well as wrestling.

2. The Yellow River basin is also called the Central Plains. Its geographical features are the loess plateau, mountains, deserts and grasslands. During the Neolithic Age there was the Yangshao culture in the Yellow River valley that also included the Longshan culture, Majiayao culture, Qijia culture and Siwa culture. Together they are referred to as the "Yangshao culture system." The middle reaches of the Yellow River, including Fenhe River, Weihe River, Jinghe River, Xinhe River and other valleys of the Yellow River tributaries, were the birthplace of the Yangshao culture system. It stretched as far as the upper and middle reaches of the Hanshui River in the south, the Hetao (Yellow River Bend) region in the north, the upper reaches of the Weihe River in Gansu in the west, and Shandong in the east. The remains of many settlements have been found in these places, and in some cases they were clustered relatively close together. According

to Prof. Chen Yongling, "In the Central Plains and the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River, the Yangshao culture of painted pottery and the Longshanoid culture of black pottery were mainly the agrarian ancestors of the Han people."① The Han people were called Huaxia. As early as the legendary Huang Di period, there emerged successively several big tribal leagues in the Yellow River valley. In the end the Huang Di tribe defeated the Yan Di tribe and brought all the tribes in the Central Plains under its control and thus the Huaxia group came into being. Therefore, people in later periods referred to Huang Di as the founder of the Huaxia group.

From the 21st century B. C. to the 8th century B. C. the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties appeared one after another in the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River. They were the ancestors of the Han people. Mr. Xu Zhongshu said: "The main body of the Xia Dynasty-the first dynasty of China-was the Qiang people. The Xia together with two tribal groups (Tang and Yu) united and became one country."② Other documents in Chinese also demonstrated that the ethnic Xia were a part of ethnic Qiang. Yan Di also had its origins in Qiang. That is to say the Yan Di tribe, Huang Di tribe, Xia tribe and Zhou tribe all belonged to the ethnic group Qiang. After they migrated to the Central Plains one after another and fused into the Huaxia group, they created the Yangshao culture in the middle and lower reaches of the Yellow River. In the mean time, the ancient Di and Qiang people who remained in Gansu and Qinghai in the Northwest created the Majiayao culture, the Qijia culture and the Siwa culture (variations of the Yangshao culture). Thus we have reasons to deduce

① "China is a Unified, Multi-Ethnic Nation Founded by Peoples of Various Ethnic Groups of China", in *A Collection of Theses on the History of Relations between Various Ethnic Groups of China*, Gansu Ethnic Publishing House, Lanzhou, 1983.

② *History of the Qiang People*, Preface, Sichuan Ethnic Publishing House, 1985.

that the Yangshao culture system was the ancient culture of the Di and Qiang ethnic groups, the main body of the Huaxia group. Therefore it can be said that the ancient culture on the Northwest loess plateaus was the creation of the ancient Qiang tribes.

The distinguishing features of the primitive culture of the Di and Qiang peoples in the Central Plains are as follows: (1) millet was their main crop, (2) they lived in houses made of soil and wood, (3) painted pottery had appeared; the painted designs were mainly basket pattern, comb pattern, and incised decorations, (4) animal designs on painted pottery were limited to fish designs, (5) symbols were incised on pottery, (6) cremation was a prevalent burial form.

Ethnic subgroups of the ancient Di and Qiang groups were distributed over a very large area. The whole of the Southwest of China was under the influence of the Di and Qiang groups. Historically, most of the ethnic groups in the Southwest and Northwest of China originated from the Di and Qiang groups. To take the Southwest as an example: in the time before the Qin Dynasty, inhabitants in the Southwest were members of the ethnic groups of Huang Di, Xia, Zhou, Qiang, Di, Shu, and others. During the Han-Jin period, there were Kunming, Sou, Sha, Cuan, Tu, Qiongdu, Zhadu, Rantuo, Ailao, Bailang and other ethnic groups and tribes in the Southwest. During the Sui and Tang dynasties, the ethnic groups and tribes in the Southwest were Tubo, Baiman, Wuman, Kunming, Dujinman, Shiman, Heman, Moxieman, Shunman, Xunchuanman, Achang, Guocuoman, Luoxingman, Dongnuguo, Supi, Bailan, Dangxiang, Yangtong, Fuguo, Jialiangyi, Duomi, and so on.

At present the ethnic groups that originated from the Di and Qiang groups are the ethnic groups of Han, and in addition, there are Tibetan, Qiang, Yi, Naxi, Jingpo, Pumi, Drung, Nu, Monpa, Lhopa, Lisu, Lahu, Bai, Jino, and Achang. All these people speak

languages belonging to the Tibetan sub-branch of the Sino-Tibetan linguistic family. The ancient Di and Qiang languages were regarded as the mother language of this language family.

Physical anthropology reveals that men of two types of physiological features existed during the Neolithic Age in the Central Plains. One was similar to the East Asian Mongoloid group, the other similar to the South Asian Mongoloid group. But in the Bronze Age the inhabitants along the Yellow River valley were similar to East Asian Mongoloid group, and they also had an obvious relationship with the modern North China aborigines.

3. The landscape in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtse and Yellow River Basin and in areas along the southeastern Yellow Sea coastline, features lakes, rivers and marshes. The Qingliangang culture of the Neolithic Age was mainly distributed in this region. This culture was distributed "in the lower reaches of the Yellow River and Huaihe River, along the East coastline, on the Bohai Gulf coastline, and in Southeast China, including the islands off the coastline. The administrative division of this region covers the vast areas of Shandong, Liaodong Peninsula, east of Sichuan, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangxi, Anhui, and to the south of the Huaihe River."①

Two big ethnic systems, Baiyue and Baipu, existed in these extensive regions in the pre-Qin period. Together they may be called the Pu-Yue ethnic system. According to Professor Liang Jiantao, the archaeological culture of the Baiyue system had the following features: (1) stone tools with edges chipped on both sides were in use, (2) crude pottery with a strip pattern was in use, (3) their pottery consisted of bowls, pots, and jars, (4) the agricultural crop was

① Shi Xingbang, "Some Problems Concerning the Cultural Systems of the Neolithic Age in China", *Journal of Nanjing Museum*, No. 2, 1980.

paddy rice and rice planting existed, (5) houses built on stilts.[①] The whole of Pu-Yue ethnic system (i. e. the Qingliangang culture) also had many important common features. For instance, the decorations on pottery were mainly pigs and birds. Professor Shi Xingbang thinks "this was to use the art of painting to mark down their ancestors' totems as a sign of the clan."[②]

As most of the ethnic groups of the Pu-Yue system lived on the seaside or near lakes, rivers, and marshes, they were good at navigation, swimming and diving. They had the custom of immersing the new-born baby into the water, and practicing rock funerals, i. e. to place the coffin in rock caves high above the ground. Besides, they had the customs of hair-cutting, tattooing, tooth chiseling, wearing long skirts and snake or bird-worship. The modern ethnic groups that originated from Pu-Yue system are the Zhuang, Bouyei, Dai, Dong, Shui, Maonan, Mulao, and Li. Besides, some ethnic groups of South Asian language group also belong to the Pu-Yue system, such as the Gaoshan people, the Blang people and the Vas. These ethnic groups are still distributed in the Yangtse River Valley, to its south and along the southeast coastline. The administrative divisions of these areas cover Guangdong, Guangxi, Hubei, Hunan, Guizhou, Fujian, Zhejiang, Taiwan and Yunnan.

The ethnic groups of the Miao-Yao linguistic branch were situated between the Pu-Yue and Di-Qiang ethnic systems.

Judging from the data now available, the physical features of the people of Pu-Yue ethnic groups were almost identical to the South-Asian type of the modern Mongoloid race. Their height was generally

① Liang Jiantao, "Baiyue Peoples' Contributions to the Formation of the Chinese Nation", *Journal of Zhongshan University*, No. 2, 1981.

② Shi Xingbang, "Some Problems Concerning the Cultural Systems of the Neolithic Age in China", *Journal of Nanjing Museum*, No. 2, 1980.

shorter than that of the Yellow River valley inhabitants of the Neolithic Age[①] and they had the custom of pulling out teeth. The modern southern ethnic groups of Pu-Yue origins still retain a short and petite stature.

To sum up, since the Neolithic Age there have existed three main archaeological cultures and ethnic systems in China. They were the Yangshao culture of the Di-Qiang ethnic system in the Central Plains, the Qingliangang culture of the Pu-Yue ethnic system in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtse River and along the Southeast coastline, and the Microlithic Culture of the Hu ethnic peoples. Through contacts and interfusions together during a long period of time, the three archaeological cultures and ethnic systems constituted the basis of the unified and multi-ethnic Chinese nation and its traditional culture.

It is common knowledge that the main body of Chinese culture is the ethnic Han culture, also known as Huaxia culture. The birthplace of the Han culture is the loess valleys in the middle reaches of the Yellow River, including the valleys of its big tributaries such as Fenhe, Weihe, Jinghe, Luohe, and Qinhe. Here is the distribution center of the remains or relics of the Yangshao culture of painted pottery. Seen from an archaeological angle, the ancient culture of the Chinese nation was formed and developed on the base of the Huaxia ethnic group whose representative was the Miaodigou culture. "Miaodigou clan cultural community was the organic heart of the ancient culture of the Chinese nation."[②] Its formation and development center was the Central Plains or the Yellow River valley.

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① Han Kangxin, Pan Qifeng, "A Study of the Race Elements in Ancient China," *Journal of Archaeology*, No. 2, 1984.

② Shi Xingbang, "Some Problems Concerning the Cultural Systems of the Neolithic Age in China", *Journal of Nanjing Museum*, No. 2, 1980.

Professor Xu Zhongshu made a textual search and proved that the ethnic Xia in the Central Plains had a close relationship in history with the Hu in the north, Yue in the south, and Di-Qiang in the west. He said that during the Xia and Shang dynasties a part of the ethnic Xia migrated to the north and later became the Xiongnu people(or Huns), a part of the ethnic Xia migrated to the south of the Yangtse River and later became the Yue people. The Qiang in the west had even closer relationship with ethnic Xia. According to Professor Xu, the main tribes of the Xia Dynasty were the Qiang. ①

The Xia and Qiang had the same origin. After the founding of the Xia Dynasty a part of the ethnic Xia moved westwards, lived together with the Qiang people and intermarried with them. Thus they assimilated quite a few ancient Di-Qiang people. A part of the Di-Qiang group migrated from the Central Plains to the south and thus brought into being some ethnic groups belonging to the Miao-Yao linguistic group. Thus, from the Shang and Zhou dynasties to the period of Qin and Han, the Huaxia ethnic group, who rose up in the Yellow River valley, migrated in all directions and expanded. They had an advanced culture and attracted, merged with and assimilated their neighboring ethnic minorities. By the Qin-Han period, they had finally established a unified, multi-ethnic nation with themselves as the dominant ethnic group. Therefore, Comrade Mao Zedong said: "Although the ethnic Han people have the largest population, this was the result of the mixed blood of many ethnic groups over a very long

① "Domestic Animals in the Neolithic Age in China" and "Bronze Culture in the North Grassland", in *Archaeological Finding and Research in New China*, Cultural Relics Publishing House, Beijing, 1984. Xu Zhongshu, *The Migration of the Ethnic Xia during the Xia and Shang Dynasties*, printed by Sichuan Administration of Cultural Relics, May 4, 1983.

time."[1] As to the blood relationship between the various ethnic groups, this is quite correct. Culturally, the advanced culture of the Han people and their ancestors was both the power behind merging of the various ethnic groups and the tie that bound the various ethnic groups into a unified multi-ethnic nation.

II

Over the past twenty years, archaeological findings on the Tibetan Plateau have been plentiful. Up to the present, cultural relics of three different cultures; Paleolithic, Neolithic and Microlithic, have been found. These relics of ancient Tibetan culture displayed not only local features but also traits of the ancient culture of the Central Plains. This shows that the Tibetan Plateau was not an isolated place in remote antiquity. The primitive aborigines on the plateau opened a road to the Central Plains and established a close relationship of mutual dependence with the people in the Central Plains.

1. Culture of the Paleolithic Age

Since 1950's relics of the Paleolithic Age were found in Tibet, including scrapers and pointed implements. They were mainly found at Sure in Tingri County, at Dogetse and Drulole in Shantsa County, at Zapu in Rutok County, and at Hor in Purang County, Ngari. The findings were all collected from above the ground, and so their exact dates could not be ascertained. Archaeologists of the Tibet Autonomous Region came to the conclusion that they were the cultural

[1] *Selected Works of Mao Zedong*, Vol. 5, p. 278.

relics of the middle and later periods of the Paleolithic Age.[①] No objections were raised amongst academic circles to this conclusion.

Tibetan stone implements of the Paleolithic Age are large and thick. They were made of breccia. No Microlithic implements were among them. The shape and size of the Paleolithic implements are narrow and elongated flakes. As to the material of the flakes, the Paleolithic implements found in Gansu, Ningxia, Jiangsu, Henan, Guangxi, and Inner Mongolia were made of quartzite or chert, while those found in Tibet were of breccia. This shows that the Paleolithic implements of Tibet have their own unique local characteristics.

But looked on as a whole, the Tibetan Paleolithic implements and those of the Central Plains had identical handicraft, and they belonged to the same cultural tradition.

We all know that the Paleolithic implements throughout China have obvious common features: flake implements made up the majority of stone implements and they maintained the gravel surface. Under similar circumstances, the Paleolithic implements found at Shantsa and Tsonyi and other places in Tibet were also mainly flake implements and preserved gravel surface.[②] According to An Zhimin's research, the Paleolithic implements found at Shantsa and Tsonyi in Tibet had close relationship with the relics of the later stages of the Paleolithic Age in Northern China.[③]

The Paleolithic implements found at Shantsa and Tsonyi in North Tibet and those found at Sure, Tingri County, have something in

① "Thirty Years of Cultural Relics Work in Tibet Autonomous Region", in *Thirty Years of Cultural Relics Work and Archaeology*, Beijing, Cultural Relics Publishing House, 1979.

② "Paleolithic and Microlithic Implements Found at Shantsa and Tsonyi in North Tibet", *Archaeology*, No. 6, 1979.

③ "Paleolithic and Microlithic Implements Found at Shantsa and Tsonyi in North Tibet", *Archaeology*, No. 6, 1979.

common; they all belonged to a primitive cultural system. Judged in terms of age, the Paleolithic implements of Sure in Tingri are earlier than those of Shantsa and Tsonyi. The technology of the latter is more advanced than the former. ① The types and processing of the stone implements of Sure were similar to the Paleolithic implements found in the hinterland of China, especially similar to the stone implements of the middle and later periods of the Paleolithic Age in Northern China. Some people think that some types of the Tingri Paleolithic implements may trace their origins to Chinese Homo sapiens, and so it can be imagined that the Tingri Paleolithic implements were of Chinese hinterland origin. ②

Here we want to point out that the primitive culture of the Paleolithic Age in Tibet was quite different from the Paleolithic culture in India. For instance, the big adzes in the early periods of the neighboring Indian Nevasian culture and the scrapers in latter period were not found amongst Tibetan Paleolithic implements. ③ Just as Mr. An Zhimin and some others pointed out: "The Soan culture of Pakistan and the Nevasian culture of India were very different from the findings (i. e. Paleolithic stone implements) in Tibet," and that "they were of different cultures and there were no inevitable relations between them."④ Before this archeological evidence, the theories regarding "Indian and Tibetan cultures are of the same origin," and "Indian and Tibetan races are of the same origin" collapsed of their own accord. In the past, Tibetan literature had many records to the

① "Paleolithic and Microlithic Implements Found at Shantsa and Tsonyi in North Tibet", *Archaeology*, No. 6, 1979.

② "Tibetan Primitive Culture Seen through the New Findings in Recent Years", *Fossil*, No. 2, 1981.

③ "Paleolithic and Microlithic Implements Found at Shantsa and Tsonyi in North Tibet", *Archaeology*, No. 6, 1979.

④ Ibid.

effect that the Tibetans might trace their origins to King Shakya of India's lineage. [①]It is obvious that these were wrong conclusions drawn by Buddhist scholarship and therefore unreliable.

2. Culture of the Mesolithic Age and the early periods of the Neolithic Age

From the Mesolithic Age to the early periods of the Neolithic Age, the primitive culture of Tibet was mainly of Microlithic Culture.

Microlithic implements of Tibetan Plateau were found as early as July-August of 1956 in the Nagchu area. [②] But the findings were few, only a core and a scraper. In July-August of 1966 at Yali and Yangju in Nyalam County a number of microlithic implements were found. Their date was assessed to be of the Mesolithic Age or a little later. The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Comprehensive Survey Team of the Chinese Academy of Science discovered 156 microlithic implements at Drulole and Luning in Shantsa County and at Mani and Suishaola in Tsonyi County in 1976. The stone implements belonged to the Mesolithic Age and the early periods of the Neolithic Age. Besides, it was reported that microlithic implements were also found at Rotok and Purang in the Ngari Prefecture, but the detailed report is not yet available. All the places mentioned above are at elevations of 4300-5200 metres, the highest place in the world where microlithic implements have ever been found. They are sparsely populated up to the present and are called "No Man's Land" in North Tibet. The finding of the above-mentioned microlithic implements proves that primitive humans lived

① *Feast for Wise Men, by Pawo Tsula Trengwa; History of Buddhism,* by Buton Rinchen Drup; and *Tibet: A Political History*, by W. D. Shakabpa, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967.

② Qiu Zhonglang, "Paleolithic Implements Found on Qinghai-Tibet Plateau", *Journal of Paleo-vertebrate*, Vol. 2, No. 2-3, 1958.

in what today is an uninhabited area.

Generally, the microlithic implements found on the Tibetan Plateau might be divided into three categories: core, flake, and scraper. They were made of jade, agate, rock crystal, chalcedony, and flint.

Although the microlithic implements spread far and wide on the Tibetan Plateau, they are of the same culture. For instance, the cuneiform stone cores found at Shantsa and Tsonyi in North Tibet are similar to those found at Yali in Nyalam County; the scrapers of North Tibet are similar to those in Nyalam. ① The microlithic implements did not co-exist with pottery or with Paleolithic vessels. So it is clear that they are the relics of one and the same primitive tribe.

The Tibetan microlithic implements do have some obvious local features. For instance the round cores have unique shapes such as conical prism, semi-circular cone and column shapes, which are rarely seen in other places. ② However, like the Paleolithic implements in Tibet, the microlithic implements did not develop in isolation. They had some common characteristics and relations with the primitive culture of the Central Plains of China

Microlithic implements made up a great part in the cultural remains found in Nyalam County of South Tibet and those found at Shayuan of Dali County in Shanxi Province. In addition, there were many flakes and implements at these two places that look like Paleolithic implements. For instance, the ball-headed scrapers of Nyalam are similar to those found in other archaeological sites in China. Again, at these two places no polished stone tools or pottery

① "New Materials about the Microlithic Implements in Tibet", *Tibet Paleontology*, Vol. 1, Science Publishing House, Beijing, 1980.

② "Paleolithic and Microlithic Implements Found at Shantsa and Tsonyi in North Tibet", *Archaeology*, No. 6, 1979.

were found. ①

Cuneiform stone cores are a kind of unique remains of Tibetan microlithic implements, and they were found at Shantsa, Tsonyi, Nagchu, and at Yali of Nyalam. At Shantsa and Tsonyi, this kind of stone cores made up 45. 74% of the total amount of microlithic implements. This kind of microlithic core was wide spread throughout China. They were found at Xiachuan in Qinshui County of Shanxi Province, at Hutouliang in Yangyuan County of Hebei Province, at Yushu on the Anganghe River and at Hutoushan at Mudanjiang in Heilongjiang Province, at Cunxi in Liaoning Province, at Sanshaliang, Dongsunite, Abudeluntai, Dayifaquan villages in Inner Mongolia, and at Lopzhor in Xinjiang. One piece of such stone core was even unearthed in the Longshan culture at Anyang of Henan Province. ②

Thus it can be seen that the Microlithic Culture of Tibet was related to the Central Plains to a certain degree. Then, what kind of a relationship did exist between them? Some archaeologists said, "The Microlithic Culture in Tibet appeared at a later time, and implements of older vintage have not been found. So it seems that it must have inherited the microlithic tradition that had come from North China and that it developed into a culture with local charactereistics. "③ We think this view is correct.

We know quite well that microlithic implements were produced in the Paleolithic Age. However, up to the present we have not found

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① "Paleolithic and Microlithic Implements Found at Shantsa and Tsonyi in North Tibet", *Archaeology*, No. 6, 1979.

② An Zhimin, "Stone-Implement Remains Found at Hailar", *Journal of Archaeology*, No. 3, 1978.

③ An Zhimin, "Stone-Implement Remains Found at Hailar", *Journal of Archaeology*, No. 3, 1978.

microlithic tools in Tibet that coexisted with Paleolithic tools. They did not mix. Their distribution areas were different, and their quality, craftsmanship and shape were also different. It was not a successive relationship. On the contrary, the successive relationship between the Paleolithic and microlithic tools of Northern China was apparent.

Up to now, no microlithic tools of the later periods of the Paleolithic Age have been found, and the microlithic tools of the Mesolithic and the Neolithic ages all were of a mature form. This contradicted the belief that Tibetan microlithic implements were local products. According to archaeologists, "The Yellow River valley in North China was the real birthplace of microlithic implements."① Judging from their technological tradition, we can say the Tibetan microlithic tools originated from the Yellow River Valley in Northern China.

3. Culture of the later periods of the Neolithic Age

By the late period of the Neolithic Age, the local characteristics of primitive culture in Tibet had a clear relationship with the Central Plains. The Karo site in Chamdo is the first scientifically excavated site. The Karo culture was a representative culture in the Tibetan Plateau during the Neolithic Age and therefore had a very important position in the ancient Tibetan culture.② But the findings from the Karo site showed that the Karo culture was not a simple one. It was the result of sustained exchanges between different cultures. Scholars used to think the Tibetan primitive culture was transplanted from Gansu-Qinghai areas and neglected the existence of aboriginal culture

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① An Zhimin, "Stone-Implement Remains Found at Hailar", *Journal of Archaeology*, No. 3, 1978.

② "Karo Neolithic Site in Chamdo, Tibet, and Its Relevant Problems", *Ethnic Studies*, No. 1, 1983.

and the cultural impacts from other areas. Scholars were familiar with the cultural remains of the Di-Qiang peoples in Gansu and Qinghai, and so their attention was often focused on the comparison between the Gansu-Qinghai culture and the Tibetan culture. In fact, some characteristics of Tibetan primitive culture were quite similar to the archeological findings in Gansu and Qinghai, and this confirms that the two neighboring areas had close relations during the primitive period. Nevertheless when we go a step further to find their origin, we find that some elements in the Tibetan primitive culture were obviously the result of impacts from the Central Plain culture. The Gansu-Qinghai area is but a passageway for the Central Plain culture to spread to Tibet. We can demonstrate this relationship by way of using the Karo site as an example.

(1) According to ancient documents, the main crop of ancient Tibetans was qingke (nas), a kind of highland barley. This was recorded even in the "Records of Tubo" of *New Tang Book* and "Records of Vassals" in the *History of the Sui Dynasty*. Even today Tibetans' main crops are still qingke and wheat; millet is rarely seen. However, a large amount of millet was found at the Karo site. ① What is the explanation for this?

According to archaeological evidence, China is the first country in the world that produced millet. There are as many as 25 Neolithic sites with millet in China. Most of these sites were located in the Yellow River valley. Amongst them, the Peiligang site at Xinzheng County in Henan Province and the Cishan site at Wu'an County in Hebei Province are the cultural remains of the early periods of the Neolithic Age. They date from the period between 5,000 BC and 6,

① "A Brief on the Excavation at the Karo Site, Chamdo, Tibet", *Cultural Relics*, No. 9, 1979.

000 BC. [①] The millet unearthed at the Cishan site may be traced back to 7, 300 years ago. It was the earliest cultivated millet not only in China but also the world. Therefore it seems the Central Plains of China are the birthplace of millet cultivation.

Where did the millet found at the Karo site at Chamdo, Tibet, come from? After the successful cultivation of the ancient millet in the Central Plains, it began to spread westward around the Neolithic Age. The ethnic Di and Qiang peoples in Gansu and Qinghai might have been the earliest to acquire the production techniques for millet. This theory is based on the fact that millet was unearthed at the Dahezhuang site (3, 700 BC) [②] and the Majiawan site (3, 200 BC) [③] in Yongjing County of Gansu Province, and at the Liuwan site (3, 400 BC) [④] in Ledu County of Qinghai Province. Then, the production techniques for millet continued to spread in two directions by way of Gansu and Qinghai. One is "through Arabia, Asia Minor, Russia, Austria, and ultimately the whole of Europe". [⑤] The other is to Southeast Asia via the Hengduan Mountains in the east of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. [⑥] From thus we may know that millet growing was the invention of the primitive inhabitants in the Central Plains and that the millet culture spread southward by way of Gansu and Qinghai. Obviously, the millet found at the Karo site in Chamdo, Tibet resulted

① "An Informal Talk on the Relations between Ancient Sichuan and the East-Asian Civilization", *Cultural Relics*, No. 9, 1983.

② "A Brief Introduction to the Excavation of Dahezhuang and Qinwei Sites—the Qijia Cultural Sites in Linxia County", *Archaeology*, No. 3, 1960.

③ "Qijia Culture Is the Continuance and Development of Majiayao Culture", *Archaeology*, No. 6, 1976.

④ "On the First Excavation of the Primitive-Society Tombs at Liuwan in Ledu County of Qinghai Province", *Cultural Relics*, No. 1 1976.

⑤ "A Textual Research on Ancient Millet", *Prehistory Studies*, No. 1, 1983.

⑥ "An Informal Talk on the Relations between Ancient Sichuan and the East-Asian Civilization", *Cultural Relics*, No. 9, 1983.

from the influence of the Central Plain culture.

(2) Different ethnic groups have different construction styles, and this may be seen in primitive societies. After two excavations in 1978 and 1979, dozens of house foundations of several different structures were found at the Karo site in Chamdo, Tibet.[①] One of them was a square quasi-underground cave structure with wooden frames and mud walls, 3.4 meters long from east to west, and 1.9 meters wide from south to north, and 0.4 meters deep. The ground surface inside the house is smooth and solid, covered with ashes of 0.3-0.5 centimeters thick. This kind of building is called in archaeology "semi-underground cave house." It is believed that this kind of building is of the Di-Qiang primitive culture, because quite a few semi-underground cave houses have been found in many Neolithic cultural remains on the upper reaches of the Yellow River.[②] However, when we read Chapter Two "Neolithic Age" of the newly-published *Archaeological Findings and Research in New China* to find out the origin of this kind of dwelling, we find that this first appeared in the Central Plains. For instance, the Cishan site in Wu'an County of Hebei Province is one of the earliest Neolithic sites in North China; its date was between 6,000 BC and 5,600 BC. A semi-underground shed was found at this site.[③] The original form of the semi-underground dwelling at the Karo site was also a shed. The semi-underground dwelling of the Yangshao culture in the middle reaches of the Yellow River lasted for about two thousand years, from about 5,000 BC to 3,000 BC. They were divided into two types: circular semi-underground

① Chapter 2, "Neolithic Age", in *Archaeological Findings and Research in New China*, Cultural Relics Publishing House, Beijing, 1984.

② Li Kunsheng, *A Probe into the Systems of Primitive Cultures in Yunnan*.

③ Chapter 2, "Neolithic Age", in *Archaeological Findings and Research in New China*, Cultural Relics Publishing House, Beijing, 1984.

cave and square semi-underground cave. ①

In the middle reaches of the Yellow River, Yangshao culture was succeeded by the Longshan culture. One of the characteristic features of the Longshan culture was that "they lived in semi-underground round houses, and that on the ground inside the house was a layer of chalk."② On the ground inside the semi-underground dwelling at Karo site F4 was also a layer of chalk. So we have reason to believe that the construction style of the semi-underground dwelling at Karo site was under the influence of the Central Plains culture. Scholars who engaged in the study of ancient architecture also said: "Through the study of the typical houses of the Karo culture and the houses in the neighboring areas, we may come to the conclusion that although the Karo culture had its own unique characteristics, it had a very close relationship with the Neolithic culture in the middle and upper reaches of the Yellow River. And the development of their house building methods were similar during the early and middle periods of the Neolithic Age."③ This may be demonstrated by a comparison of the evolution of construction forms at the Karo site with those in the Central Plains:

Karo:

Cave dwelling → semi-underground dwelling → ground building (wooden frame and mud wall) → wood construction or fort structure system.

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① Chapter 2, "Neolithic Age", in *Archaeological Findings and Research in New China*, Cultural Relics Publishing House, Beijing, 1984.

② Yin Da, *Neolithic Age*, Sanlian Bookstore, 1979.

③ Jiang Daoyuan, *A Preliminary Probe into the Dwelling Buildings of the Tibetan Karo Culture*.

Central Plain:

Cave dwelling → semi-underground dwelling → ground building (wooden frame and mud wall) →wood construction.

From this simple comparison we know that the two styles had many things in common and differences appeared only in the later periods.

(3) We have noted that some implements unearthed at the Karo site are obviously similar to some implements of the Neolithic Age in the Central Plains. For instance, a greater part of the polished stone tools (altogether 20 pieces) unearthed at the Karo site were perforated stone knives, including semilunar stone knives.① These kind of semilunar stone knives were also unearthed at many sites of the Yangshao and Longshan cultures.②The difference between them lies only in the method of perforation and the length of the edge. Some of the patterns on the pottery unearthed at the Karo site, such as cord pattern and basket pattern had also been found in the Yangshao culture and Longshan culture of the Central Plains. Most of the pottery of the Karo site was made by hand with a clay-strip forming technique, as in the Yangshao culture. That the pottery of these two places had many things in common indicates the bilateral exchanges that had once occurred between the two cultures.

4. Evidence recorded in documents

It is not a coincidence that the Tibetan primitive culture had many similarities with that of the Central Plains of China. The well-known Chinese historian Fan Wenlan said that the Yangshao culture of

① *Cultural Relics*, No. 9, 1979.

② Chapter 2, in *Archaeological Findings and Research in New China*, Cultural Relics Publishing House, Beijing, 1984.

the Central Plain was the culture of the Huang Di's (Yellow Emperor) tribe.[1] As we know, the term "Huang Di" does not refer to a single person, it refers to a tribal league of the Central Plains in the Neolithic Age. According to *Shi Ji* (Records of the Historian), the Yellow Emperor had twenty-five sons. Here the term "sons" certainly means different clans or tribal leagues. Two of his "sons" were called Qingyang and Changyi. Qingyang was sent to live in Jiangshui and Changyi in Ruoshui. *Shan Hai Jing* (Book of Mountains and Rivers) also says: "Yellow Emperor married Leizu, and she bore him a son named Changyi. Changyi was sent to live in Ruoshui." According to Mr. You Zhong's textual research, Jiangshui and Ruoshui are the Jinshajiang River valley and Yarlung River valley.[2] Thus, as early as primitive society, clans or tribal groups of the Huang Di's league began to move to the Yarlung and Jinshajiang River valleys on the eastern border of the Tibetan Plateau, and they came into contact with Tibetan ancestral people.

According to Tibetan documents, the earliest ancestors of the Tibetans were "monkey-transformed men". At first they were grouped into four clans (mi-bu-rus-bzhi) or six tribes (mi-bu-rigs-drug). They had no king (rgyal-po), and they lived by gathering wild berries and fruits so they were in the primitive society period. These clans or tribes lived at Sotang, Tsetang, Yukajutang and Tsitang in the Yarlung Valley.[3] All these places are in the Yarlung Tsangpo Valley. All the cultural sites (except Karo) of the later periods of the Neolithic

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① *An Outline History of China*, Revised edition, Book 1, People's Publishing House, Beijing, 1965, p. 86.

② You Zhong, *Ancient Ethnic Groups in Southwest China*, Yunnan People's Publishing House, Kunming, 1980.

③ Tibetan historical books such as "*Feast for Wise Men*", "*A Description of Lang Lineage*", and "*Teachings of Songtsen Gampo*", etc.

Age in Tibet are concentrated in the Yarlung Tsangpo Valley. The cultural sites include Nyingchi, Medog, and Lhasa; they are the relics of the ancient Tibetan four clans or six tribes. A female human skeleton, including cranium, lower jaw, thoracic vertebra, and thigh bone, was discovered in Nyingchi Prefecture in September 1975; it is commonly called "Nyingchi Man."① On the thighbone there is a indentation which was formed by customarily squatting down.② It is common knowledge that at the present among the southwest ethnic groups of China, Tibetan women are the only ones who have the custom of squatting on the heels. It seems that the Nyingchi Man must have been the earliest ancestor of ethnic Tibetans. On the other hand, the line between the cranium and temporal bone of the Nyingchi Man is similar to that of the Ziyang Man and modern people of North China. Measurement of the thoracic vertebra suggests that the Nyingchi Man is close to the people in the Central Plains of the Yin Dynasty. The origin of the Nyingchi Man is therefore close to that of the ethnic Han and Tibetan.③ The ancestors of Tibetans in the Neolithic Age must have certain relationship with the inhabitants in the Central Plains; otherwise there could not have been so many identical physical features among them.

5. Physiological features and heredity

H. E. Richardson in his *A Short History of Tibet*④ and W. D. Shakabpa in his *Tibet: A Political History*⑤ discuss the origins of the

① "Nyingchi Man and Its Cultural Relics", *Tibetan Paleontology*, Book 1, Science Press, Beijing, 1980.

② Ibid.

③ Ibid.

④ H. E. Richardson, *A Short History of Tibet*, New York, Dutton, 1962.

⑤ Tsepon W. D. Shakabpa, *Tibet: A Political History*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1967.

Tibetan race. Shakabpa raised the theory of "originating from the Indian race." Richardson in his book said: "Speaking accurately and scientifically, Tibetans cannot be called Chinese. Over the past two thousand years, Chinese also regarded them as people of another race."

In addition, Soviet Union scholar N. Roerich in his article "The Tibetan Nomadic Tribes" said: "A careful study of the modern Hor herdsmen shows there are several types of appearance among them. The majority of them are of the type of Homolpinus (Ancient Highlanders). This type shows a great amount of foreign blood had mixed in, probably of Iranian."①

These three scholars had one thing in common; they presumed the Tibetan race is founded from outside of Tibet. But what is the truth?

Richardson said in his *A Short History of Tibet* that owing to the bad conditions of communication and lack of data in both ancient and modern Tibetan physiology, we have insufficient ancient physiological data. But this is untrue. In fact we already have the data of ancient Tibetan physiology-the Nyingchi man of the Neolithic Age.

The Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau Comprehensive Investigation Team affiliated to the Chinese Academy of Science in September 1975 discovered the remains of Nyingchi Man. ② The human bones included a skull, lower jaw (maxilla inferior), thoracic vertebra, and thighbone, etc. of a single individual. It was ascertained after analysis that the Nyingchi Man was a female and 30-40 years of age. The results of scientific measurement are as follows:

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① *A Collection of Translated Papers on Ethnic Societies and History*, edited by Institute of Ethnic Studies affiliated to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, No. 1, 1977.

② "Nyingchi Man and Its Cultural Relics", *Tibetan Paleontology*, Book 1, Science Press, Beijing, 1980.

The chord radian index of the skull is 90. 1, near to that of Lijiang Man 90. 8 and Ziyang Man 90. 9, but nearer to the modern man 89. 7. The chord radian index of occipital bone (back part of the skull bone) is 77. 5, near to the Lijiang Man of the Paleolithic Age 80. 6. The line between the skull and temporal bone is near to that of Ziyang Man and modern people in North China. The length, width and index of the occipital bone of the Nyingchi Man are near to that of the Mongols. Judging by the least width of the lower law branches, the racial origin of the Nyingchi Man is near to that of ethnic Han and Tibetans.① The measurement result of thoracic vertebra shows Nyingchi Man is near to the Chinese in the Yin Dynasty.

The nasal-cheekbone angle is quite different between the three races of the world. The black race is of 140-142, the white race is of 135-137, and the yellow race is of 145-149 . The Nyingchi Man is of 149, near to the yellow race. The height of the nasal area is as follows: Mongoloid 2. 8 mm., American Indian 3. 7 mm., European 5. 0 mm., Banpo Man 2. 4 mm., while that of Nyingchi Man is 2. 5 mm., near to the Mongoloid and the Banpo Man of Xi'an of China of the Neolithic Age. The nasal area index is as follows: Mongoloid 35. 8, American Indian 41. 9, European 50. 9, Banpo Man 29. 7, while Nyingchi Man is 35. 7, near to the Mongoloid and then to Banpo Man. Nyingchi Man belongs to the Mongoloid race, and has close relations with Group A Tibetans.②

The data about the Nyingchi Man cited above prove incontrovertibly that the predecessors of the ethnic Tibetans had the following racial features:

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① "Nyingchi Man and Its Cultural Relics", *Tibetan Paleontology*, Book 1, Science Press, Beijing, 1980.

② "Natural Environment of Nyingchi Basin of Tibet in the Later Period of Cenozoic Era", in *Paleo-Vertebrate and Hominid*, No. 1, 1980.

(1) The chord radian index of the skull, the chord radian index of occipital bone (back part of the skull bone) and the location of the line between the skull and temporal bone are near to those of the Lijiang Man and Ziyang Man. The Ziyang Man was discovered in Sichuan Province. Generally, Chinese scholars regard the Ziyang Man as one of the representatives of the Mongoloid race. ①Ziyang Man and the Upper Cave Man have much in common, e. g. nasal cavity, nose ridge, and high and narrow nose. The Upper Cave Man is the representative of Mongoloid race. ② Therefore, Ziyang Man is no doubt of Mongoloid race. The Nyingchi Man is near to the Ziyang Man. This shows he was also of the Mongoloid race. Both Ziyang Man and Lijiang Man are the primitive people of the Paleolithic Age discovered in Southwest China. They were the predecessors of the Chinese nation and the common ancestors of the various ethnic groups, including ethnic Tibetans, in Southwest China.

(2) The location skull-temporal-bone line of the Nyingchi Man is near to the modern people in North China. The result of measurement of the thoracic vertebra is that the Nyingchi Man comes close to the Chinese of the Yin Dynasty. The height and index of the nasal area come near to the Xi'an Banpo Man.

(3) The Indians and Iranians belong to the Indian-Afghanistan racial type of the European race. The nasal-cheekbone angle is quite different between them and the Nyingchi Man. The Nyingchi Man's nasal-cheekbone angle comes near to that of the Mongoloid race. Therefore, to say the predecessors of the ethnic Tibetans originated from India and Iran is unbelievable.

(4) A study of the minimum width of Nyingchi Man's lower Jaw

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① Han Kangxin, Pan Qifeng, "A Study of the Elements of Ancient Chinese Race", *Journal of Archeology*, No. 2, 1984.

② Ibid.

proved that they were the predecessors of ethnic Tibetans, near to the Han people. That is, the racial origin of the predecessors of the Tibetans is fundamentally the same as that of the various ethnic groups in the Central Plains.

Judging from these four points, it is groundless to say that "the Tibetans cannot be called Chinese" and that the Tibetan race originated from a foreign country.

Up to now we have proved that the ancient Tibetans were of Mongoloid race and were Chinese (and that they were not Indians or Iranians) by way of scientific physiological data from ancient Nyingchi Man. Now we shall make a further explanation by way of the physiological data (including blood types and heredity) of modern Tibetans.

Teachers and students of the Fudan University conducted a physiological survey of the 1, 542 students of the Tibetan Ethnic Institute at Xianyang City. These students came from all over Tibet and were a fair representation of the basic physical features of the Tibetan race. This survey and analysis shows ethnic Tibetans are of the Mongoloid race. ① Their physiological features are as follows: medium height, skin yellow-brown, straight hair, wide eyes, the exterior angle of the eye being higher than the interior angle, with Mongolian fold, low-high superciliary ridge, medium width of face, the nasal height being between medium and low, straight nose, ellipsoid nostril, and meso encephalon. Judging from these physical features, the modern Tibetans are closest to the East-Asian type of the Mongoloid race. The majority of the population of China, Korea and Japan belong to the East-Asian type. Tibetans, together with the

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① "A Preliminary Study of Tibetan Physiological Morphology", collected in *An Investigation Report of China's Eigth Ethnic Groups by China Anthropology Association*.

majority of the population of China, belong to the same racial group.

According to a physical survey of the 145 students of the Tibetan Cadres Class of the Central Institute for National Minorities in 1980, Tibetans have straight and black hair, brown eyes, with eye fold, their exterior angle of the eye being higher than the interior angle, straight nose, nostril elliptical, medium-thick lips, with protruding lips and cheekbones, wide and flat face, and sparse body hair.①

These physical features are the features of East-Asian racial type to which the majority of ethnic groups of China belong.

Now let's examine the comparative table concerning the various measurement values between the Tibetans, the Hans, and ethnic minorities of China. Most of the average values of the Tibetans are in the variation spectrum of the modern Chinese. This proves that the ethnic Tibetan is Chinese and that the physical features of the Tibetans are identical with those of the modern Chinese. They all belong to the same racial type-the East-Asian type of the Mongoloid race.

Table 1 Comparison of various measurement values between Tibetans, Hans and other ethnic groups

Items	Tibetan	Hans in 15 provinces		18 ethnic minorities	
		Average value	Variation range	Average value	Variation range
Head length (g-op)	193.9	187.7	183.3 - 193.3	188.7	183.9 - 193.3
Head width (eu-eu)	156.1	154.1	150.3 - 157.7	156.8	150.2 - 163.2
Minimum width of head (ft-ft)	107.0	102.0	99.3 - 104.4	105.8	101.6 - 117.1
Facial width (zy-zy)	147.5	144.5	142 - 147.6	146.2	142 - 148.3
Height of face (tr-gn)	192.2	188.6	185 - 192.4	188.3	183 - 192.2
Height of face shape (n-gn)	127.7	125.8	122.1 - 129.4	125.8	121.1 - 129.6
Height of nose (n-ns)	59.1	57.9	54.4 - 59.9	58.4	53.6 - 60.1
Width of nose (dl-dl)	38.6	38.9	37.4 - 40.2	38.6	37.3 - 40.4
Width of mouth (ch-ch)	50.5	50.4	49.1 - 52.7	50.5	49.4 - 52.7
Width of lower law (go-go)	118.6	115.6	110.7 - 119.9	118.1	110.8 - 122.6

① "Physical Features of Ethnic Tibetans," *Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 4, No. 3, August 1985.

It is common knowledge that China has a population of more than one billion. Among them more than nine hundred million are the Han people, making up 93.3% of the total. Historically, the Han culture has always been the main body of the Chinese culture. The Han culture originated in the middle reaches of the Yellow River, including the present Shanxi, Hebei and other provinces.

The result of a comparative study of the modern physical anthropology shows: [①] the Dij value and O2/Q value of the Tibetan physique are closest to the Han people in Shanxi and Hebei provinces of China. See Table 2.

Table 2 The physique differences between the Tibetans and Hans

Place	Dij value	O2/Q value
Hans in Jilin Province	3.6667	3.17
Hans in Hebei Province	2.3388	0.64
Hans in Shanxi Province	1.7981	0.61
Hans in Hunan Province	4.0873	12.79
Hans in Guangxi Region	5.4411	22.56
Hans in Fujian Province	3.9459	9.16
Hans in Guizhou Province	3.3200	7.45
Hans in Yunnan Province	2.6407	4.73
Hans in Sichuan Province	3.2717	10.70

Mr. Yuan Yida and Du Ruopu in their article "A Preliminary Study of the Hereditary Distance between China's Ethnic Group and Other Ethnic Groups"[②] pointed out: "The research result shows that

① "Physical Features of Ethnic Tibetans," *Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 4, No. 3, August 1985.

② *Journal of Genetics*, Vol. 10, pp. 395-405, 1983; Vol. 9, pp. 395-401, 1982.

the hereditary distance between the ethnic Tibetans and Mongols is the nearest (0.0104)." Here the "ethnic Tibetans" refers to the Tibetans living in Tibet and those who live in India, Nepal, and Norway.

According to reports, a survey of 136 Tibetans now living in the north of India shows that the average of their gene Di4 frequency is 0.49, near to the frequency (0.46) of the Hans in North China.①

The investigation data and archeological materials fully demonstrated that the racial origin of the Tibetans had nothing to do with India or Iran. On the contrary, the physical features of the Tibetans, both ancient and modern, are basically near to those of other ethnic groups of China, especially of the ethnic groups of North China and Northwest China (including the Hans and other ethnic minorities). This shows the Tibetans and many other ethnic groups of China originated with a common ancestry; physical features show they are of the East-Asian type of the Mongoloid race. The allegation that the Tibetans came from south, from west, or from a foreign country is groundless. From physical anthropological viewpoint, ethnic Tibetans are doubtlessly Chinese.

We have not yet been able to find any material to demonstrate that the Tibetans have mixed blood with Iranians. On the contrary, scholars at home and abroad demonstrated with physical data that the physical features of Tibetans are mainly of East-Asian type, including mixed elements of the South-Asian type. Archeological data also proves the existence of these mixed elements.

Ⅲ

Tibetan ethnic group has a long history and has been an

① *Journal of Genetics*, Vol.10, pp. 395-405, 1983; Vol.9, pp. 395-401, 1982.

inalienable member of the Chinese nation in the past and today. Therefore, when we discuss the origin of the Tibetans and their ancient culture, we should not confine our views within the limits of a single Tibetan Plateau. Instead, we should look for the evolution of the ancient Tibetan culture and the Tibetan historical origins within the general evolutionary law of all the ethnic groups in China. Only in this way can we be free of any political bias. In fact, the origin and the development of Tibetan ethnic groups and cultures result from a process of assimilation and absorption of the culture of three main ethnic systems in China.

Ever since the Neolithic Age there have been three archaeological cultural systems and ethnic systems in the lands of China. The ethnic cultures of these three main systems moved westward and gathered on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, the well-known "roof of the world." Thus, the ancient culture and ancient ethnic groups in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau displayed a certain degree of mixed origin. In different areas, foreign cultures had a different impact on aboriginal culture. Generally speaking, the Northern Tibet Plateau adjoins the grasslands of Northern China and their natural environment is identical. Therefore, it absorbed more of the ancient culture of nomadic ethnic groups from the northern grasslands of the Chinese nation. The high mountain valleys in eastern Tibet are located between the two great rivers-the Yellow River and the Yangtse River, and thus became a meeting place for the Yellow River ethnic system and the Yangtse River ethnic system. But during the process of their contacts and competitions, the culture of the Di-Qiang system of the Yellow River valley seemed to have gained the upper hand. The reason is obvious. The Di-Qiang ethnic system grew millet and lived in semi-cave houses. These cultural features were more adaptive to the high mountain valleys in Eastern Tibet, at 2,000 to 3,000 metres above sea level, than the Pu-

Yue people who grew rice and lived in bamboo houses built on stilts. The Southern Tibetan valleys are the center of Tibetan culture and the birthplace of the Tibetan ethnic group. A unique aboriginal cultural system has existed here ever since the Neolithic Age. According to historical records and archaeological material, this aboriginal cultural system was closely related to the modern Tibetan culture. Therefore we call it the aboriginal ethnic system.

The basis of the Tibetan ethnic group and its culture is the aborigines and their culture in the Southern Tibetan valleys. At the same time it absorbed and assimilated the primitive nomadic culture of the northern grassland, the Hu nomadic ethnic groups, the primitive Yangshao culture of the Central Plains and the Di-Qiang ethnic groups. Therefore, the ancient culture of the Tibetans had some manifest features. On the one hand, it has the features of the aborigines of Tibet proper; on the other, it contains the features of nomadic culture of northern grassland and the features of primitive culture of the Di-Qiang people in the Central Plains. Consequently, the Tibetan ethnic group is not unitary, neither in blood nor in culture. Viewed as a whole, Tibetan culture is doubtlessly an inalienable and important part of the Chinese nation.

The Tibetan Plateau—One of the Homes of Early Man

1. Introduction

For years, the archaeological study of primitive society in Tibet has remained a blank page. Because of its high elevation and cold, thin air, in many people's eyes the Tibetan Plateau is a vast barren land, unfit for habitation by primitive human beings. In debating the origins of the Tibetan people, their forerunners are always regarded as having come from outside Tibet. One person has even suggested that the first people to inhabit Tibet were the ancient Qiang ethnic group who moved to the region from the Hehuang area during the Neolithic Age. Consequently, the Tibetan Plateau is customarily described as a region with no sign of ancient human habitation. But what does the evidence tell us?

Discoveries made in geology, biology and archaeology demonstrate that in primaeval times the Tibetan Plateau was not only capable of supporting the existence of primitive people, but was probably one of the birthplaces of primitive man. I put forward this hypothesis on the following grounds.

2. The natural environment of Tibet in early times

The reason why most ordinary people regard the Tibetan Plateau as an unfit place for primitive people to live is because of its high elevation, low temperature and barren land. However, according to the investigations of geologists and biologists, the dry, cold climate of today's Tibet and its high elevation only came into being after the Quaternary Period. ① Before then, the plateau had a less extreme geological environment and a milder climate than it does now. During the Pliocene Period, the general height of the Himalayas was only 2,000-2,500 metres. ② That is to say, the mountains were not high enough to block the warm, wet monsoons from the Indian Ocean which blew straight onto the plateau and provided far more moisture than now. Take the southern and northern slopes of the Himalayas for example: "The annual average temperature at that time was around 10 degrees centigrade and the annual precipitation was about 2,000-2,500 millimetres"③ Besides, among the dense evergreen broadleaf trees and shrubs appeared groups of Hipparions. Basically, the climate there was subtropical. The Gyirong (sKyid-grong) Basin, in the middle of the Himalayan range, now lies 2,100-4,300 metres above sea level. But in the Pliocene Period, the elevation there was just 700 metres and the annual average temperature was similar to that of the Sichuan Basin today. ④ Large areas in the northern part of the Tibetan Plateau, 5,000 metres above sea level on average, were

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① Chinese Academy of Sciences' Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Comprehensive Survey Team, *Xizang Gushengwu* (Tibet's prehistoric organisms), vol. 1, Beijing, Scientific Press, 1980.

② Ibid.

③ Ibid.

④ Ximalayashan Zhongduan Shangxinshi Sanzhima Dongwuqun Shenghuo Huanjing de Tantao (A study of the living environments of the Hipparion fauna in the Pliocene Period at the middle of the Himalayas), *Gujizhui Dongwu yu Gurenlei* (Prehistoric vertebrates and man), vol. 20, no. 1, 1982.

covered with lakes before the Quaternary Period. The climate then was wet, with a large amount of tree and vegetation cover. Some scientists believe that "the natural conditions in this area were suitable for ancient human beings to live a livelihood of gathering, fishing and hunting". ① What particularly deserves our attention is that some fossil Hipparions have been found in the southern and northern parts of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau in the last ten years. This kind of animal is generally believed to have lived between 500 and 1,000 metres above sea level. Hipparion fossils have also been found in India's Siwalik Hills and at Lufeng, in China's Yunnan Province, along with the discovery of remains of Ramapithecus. ② All these show that after the Pliocene Period there existed a natural environment suitable for primitive beings on the Tibetan Plateau. Therefore, when we consider the mystery of man's birthplace, the Tibetan Plateau should be taken into consideration. Actually, some scientists have already examined this possibility. China's well-known anthropologist, Jia lanpo, pointed out recently:

When we speak of man's birthplace, the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau should not be neglected. It is a promising site. Investigations and studies in Tibetan areas conducted in recent years have caused some scholars to think that when the Himalayas had a height of only 1,000 metres during the Pliocene Period, its "screen function" was not remarkable; both the southern and northern sides were nourished by wet monsoons from the Indian Ocean. This has caused us to rethink our ideas. The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau area was a suitable place for the

① Zangbei Shenzha Shuanghu de Jiushiqi he Xinshiqi (The palaeoliths and microliths of *Shantsa* and *Shuanghu northern Tibet*), *Kao Gu* (Archaeology), no. 6, 1979.

② Yunnan Lufeng Shangxinshi Buru Dongwuqun (The mammal fauna of the Pliocene Period in Lufeng, yunnan), *Gujizhui Dongwu yu Gu Renlei* (Prehistoric vertebrates and man), vol. 17, no. 1, 1979.

evolution of himinids, and it is a possibility that it will be this region in which we find the missing link in the apes-to-man chain. ①

Thus, not only scientific discoveries in palaeontology and geology, but also the opinions of scientists tell us that the Tibetan Plateau could have been one of the homes of primitive man.

3. Archaeological finds

Archaeological finds were first made on the Tibetan Plateau in the 1950s. In July and August 1956, research workers from the Institute of Geology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences found a batch of microliths and chipped stone implements in Nagchu and further to the north at the source of the Yangtze River. Some of these implements might belong to the Old Stone Age. ② A comprehensive survey of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau conducted since then has led to the discovery of stone implements at twenty-eight sites. ③ For instance, on the southern slope of Zur-ri Mountain in Dingri County, forty stone pieces-stone scrapers and pointed stone artifacts-were discovered between 1966 and 1968. ④ In July and August 1966, thirty stone implements from the Palaeolithic and Neolithic Ages were found at Nyalam's Yali and Yangjuan. ⑤ In 1976, scientific personnel from the Chinese Academy

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① Woguo Xinan Diqu zai Kaoguxue he Renlei Yanjiu Zhong de Zhongyao Diwei (The important position of southwestern areas in archaeological and anthropologi-cal studies), *Yunnan Shehui Kexue* (Yunnan Social Science), no. 3, 1984.

② Qingzang Gaoyuan Jiushiqi de Faxian (The discovery of palaeoliths on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau), *Gujizhui Dongwu Xuebao (Journal of prehistoric vertebrates)*, vol. 2, nos. 2-3, 1958.

③ Xizang Zizhiqu Wenwu Gongzuo Sanshinian (Thirty years of cultural relics work in the Tibet Autonomous Region), *Wenwu Kaogu Gongzuo Sanshinian* (Thirty years of cultural relics and archaeological work), Beijing, Cultural Relics Publishing House, 1979.

④ Cong Jinnian Xinfaxian Kan Xizang de Yuanshi Wenhua (New finds in recent years and the primitive culture of Tibet), *Hua Shi* (Fossils), no. 2, 1981.

⑤ *Kao Gu* (Archaeology), no. 1, 1972.

of Sciences' Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Expedition collected 355 stone implements in northern Tibet's Shantsa, Shuanghu, Rutog, Purang and Gyirong. Preliminary analysis has dated 156 of these to the Old Stone Age and identified 169 as microliths.①

Most of these stone implements were found on the surface of the ground, so we have no way of drawing evidence about them from the soil stratum. But by comparing their shape, workmanship and other features with other Palaeolithic implements from surrounding areas, it was possible to determine that the palaeoliths were produced in the middle and late periods of the Old Stone Age,② while the microliths belonged to the Middle Stone Age and the early New Stone Age. In other words, from 10,000-50,000 years ago when Homo sapiens was living in the rudimentary stage of clan society.

What particularly caused our interest was not the quantity of the implements, but their wide distribution across two-thirds of the Tibet Autonomous Region-between a latitude of 28 to 34 degrees north and a longitude of 80 to 90 degrees east. The average elevation in this area is about 5, 000 metres above sea level; the annual average precipitation is below 200 millimetres. Combined with low temperatures, the climate can only be described as severe. Even at its peak in July, it is never hotter than 10 degrees centigrade, while in winter it can fall to 40 degrees below zero. There are still places known as "no-man's-land" at the northern end of the plateau.③ The fact that these relics of early human existence are found in such a high, cold mountainous region shows that in ancient times the Tibetan Plateau was not unfit for human habitation. On the contrary, the

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① Xizang Faxian Daliang Gurenlei Shiqi (The large numbers of stone implements used by prehistoric man found in Tibet), Gansu Ribao (*Gansu Daily*), May 21, p. 3, 1980.

② See n. 9.

③ See n. 1.

archaeological finds fully attest that, at least since the Old Stone Age, primitive humans did live on most parts of the plateau. Undoubtedly, these primitive beings included the ancestors of today's Tibetan people and the other minorities of the Tibetan Plateau.

4. Myths and scientific evidence

The Tibetans are the major nationality of the Tibetan Plateau. They are people with a long history, during the course of which they have composed many legends about heaven, earth and the origin of mankind. They may give us clues about the life of the primitive people who inhabited the plateau.

It has been proved that 40 million years ago, during the Tertiary Period, the Tibetan Plateau was a vast expanse of water. Quite a few historical documents written in Tibetan, including the *mKhas-pa'i dga'-ston (A feast for the wise)* and the *Deb-ther sngon-po (The blue annals)* contain myths to the effect that Tibet was once a part of the sea. The stories vary from one to another, but their essential content has been captured by one old Tibetan scholar: "Long ago, Tibet was a large sea. When the waters dried up, the land emerged; afterwards there appeared forests, then the beasts and the first man."① Some texts contain an alternative Buddhist explanation, namely that the Tibetan landmass owes its formation to the power of Avalokite's vara. ②

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① *Xizang Jianming Lishi* (A concise history of Tibet), Lhasa, Tibet People's Publishing House, 1980.

② On the subject of the landscape in ancient Tibet the *mKhas-pa'i dga'-ston* states: At that time, the upper region of mNga'-ris skor-gsum was a land full of ponds and pools; dBus-gtsang ru-bzhi, in the central region, was network of ditches and water-ways; mDo-khams sgang-drug, in the lower area, was all fields; all these were immersed in the sea. In order to save all natural beings, Avalokitevara began to pray and the hot sea started to cool and quieten down. Then the water rushed away through the Kong-po gorges and disappeared... and Tibet assumed its current appearance.

Anyway, my point is that in remote antiquity the area we now know as Tibet was once a part of the sea. Research conducted by geologists and palaeontologists attests to the fact that the Himalayas and the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau were formed many dozens of millions of years ago. It was only after the Pliocene Period that the Himalayas rose from the earth. Before this, 350 million years ago, they, along with the Tanggula (gDang-la) and kailas mountains, simply did not exist. ①

All the world's peoples have legends concerning the origin of the human race. The Tibetan variation on this theme begins with a rhesus monkey, who after being instructed by Avalokite's vara, married a demoness. The descendants of their sons and daughters years later became the first people to settle on the Tibetan Plateau. We know that the passage in which Avalokite'svara teaches his disciple, the rhesus monkey, is a Buddhist addition, because not one Tibetan document written before the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet (such as the ancient Tibetan historical works preserved in Dunhuang) features this episode. Nor can it be heard in the folktales that have passed down orally over the generations, or in the legends of early Tibetan religion. This suggests that the original story must have been invented at a very early date.

Although this myth happens to be similar to the theories of evolution that trace man's origins back to apes, it is probably nothing more than a happy coincidence. Tibetan myths, however, do have some grounding in reality. For instance, the rock cave where the rhesus monkey mentioned in the legend once lived can still be seen on Gonbo Mountain near Tsethang in southern Tibet. In northern Tibet's Shantsa and Shuanghu, near to where the stone implements were

① ' Shijie Wuji' Ceng Weiyu Nanji (The ' roof of the world' used to be in Antarctica), *Xinhua Wenzhai* (Xinhua Digest), no. 8, 1984.

discovered, are natural caves in which primitive man could have lived. [1] Modern scientific research has shown that during the Ice Age's Mousterian Epoch, primitive beings who lived by hunting in mountains regions chose rock caves as their homes. [2]

Academic circles currently disagree over the question of whether the Tibetan Plateau was one of the places in which man evolved from apes. There are, however, more and more scholars who now believe the region once possessed all the conditions necessary for human evolution. As early as the 1930s, Amadou Grabau, director of the Beijing Natural History Experiment Institute, put forward the theory that, as the Himalayas rose, the forests that covered both Tibet and what is now Mongolia vanished. With no trees to live in, apes were forced to become ground-dwellers and then gradually evolved into hominids. [3] One famous anthropologist, who maintains that "man is descended from the Gigantopithecus", has sugested that prehistoric man migrated from the Central Asian plateau in all directions. Some of these people arrived in Germany, as can be seen from Heidelberg Man, some went to Zhoukoudian near Beijing, leading to the discovery we know as Peking Man, and others went to Java, thus Java Man. [4] The Central Asian plateau I refer to is the region stretching from Asia Minor and Egypt in the west, India in the south and the Qinghai-Tibet and Yunnan-Guizhou Plateaus in the east. Quite a few scholars around the world have considered this vast, apparently barren

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① See n. 5.

② *Shiwu de Qiyuan* (The origin of things) written by Julius E. Lips, translated by Wang Ningshen, Chengdu, Sichuan Nationality Publishing House, 1982.

③ Ge Weihan, *Huaxi Xiehe Daxue Gubowuguan de Shiqi* (The stone artifacts in the Cultural Relics Museum of Huaxi Union University).

④ See n. 7.

highland as the birthplace of man.[1] If the Tibetan Plateau is one of the birthplaces of man, it must be one of the homes of man's evolution.

All theories of human evolution accept that apes came down from the trees because of some kind of natural change. Finding themselves living on the ground, they gradually learned to stand, walk and then, through labour, became human. But what was that natural change? This still remains a problem. Some scholars believe that it was the tectonic movements that formed the Himalayas. It is stated in more detail by Professor Tong Enzheng:

> Through the comprehensive studies of scientists, it has been shown that the crucial turning point in man's evolution happened to Ramapithecus in the Pliocene Period. The cause of this change must have been a powerful natural force. In the southwest, the rising of the Himalayas is the factor to which scientists have paid most attention.
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> The Himalayas are now a plateau of snowy and icy ridges and peaks. This was not the case before the start of the Pliocene Period about 12 million years ago. Palaeobotanic research in the Everest region, conducted by the Tibet scientific comprehensive survey team from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, has shown that since the late Pliocene the climate in this area has changed from being wet and warm to being dry and cold. The original vegetation of this region was subtropical forest, which has now become grassland. In the Pliocene Period, the Himalayas averaged just 1,000 metres in height; now they average 6,100 metres, with the highest peak of 8,848 metres. This increase in elevation has caused a temperature drop of 20 degrees

[1] Jia Lanpo, *Zhongguo Yuanren jiqi Wenhua* (China's ape-man and its culture), China press, 1964.

centigrade, while today's precipitation is between one-seventh and one-tenth of what it was in the past. Due to this change in climate and its corresponding effect on animal and plant life, Ramapithecus had to forego his forest life, learn to walk on the ground, and adapt himself to both a new diet and new ways of searching for food. This led to a gradual change in his physiology and marked the first stage in the evolution of ape to man. ①

Although the argument outlined above cannot yet be supported by scientific evidence-no fossils revealing the evolutionary progress of ape to man have yet been found on the Tibetan Plateau-this does not mean they will not be unearthed in the future. The following facts explain why I believe they will be.

1. Between the Pliocene (perhaps even earlier) and the Quaternary periods, there existed on the Tibetan Plateau suitable natural conditions for the survival of apes and their descendants, primitive man.

2. The fossils of man's forefather, Ramapithecus, have been found to the east of the Tibetan Plateau in Yunnan and to its west on the India-Pakistan border. These two places are both very close to the plateau. Yunnan's Lufeng lies to the south of the Hengduan mountain range, the name given to the southern end of the Tanggula (gDang-la) and Nyainqentanglha (gNyan-chen thang-lha) mountains, on the middle reaches of the Jinsha River. The river runs from north to south and has facilitated contact between Yunnan and Tibet since ancient times. The Siwalik Hills (where Ramapithecus was first found) along the Indus River valley run across the India-Pakistan border along the

① Tong Enzheng, Lüelun Woguo Xinan Diqu de Shiqian Kaogu (On prehistoric archaeology in the southwestern regions of China), *Sichuan Wenwu* (Cultural relics of Sichuan province), no. 2, 1985.

southern flank of the Himalayas, separated by only one chain of mountains from Tibet. As such fossils have been found so near to Tibet, no one can be certain they will not also be found within Tibet itself. Palaeontological studies of Hipparion from the early Pliocene found in Tibet's Bulong basin and the similar fauna of the same period from the Siwaliks have revealed that they were closely related: "The Himalayas at that time were not high enough to block animals from travelling between the two places". [1] Hence we can infer that Tibet's Bulong basin, like the Siwalik Hills, was once an ideal habitat for Ramapithecus. Further evidence for this comes from the alpine grassland region of Biru County, on the upper reaches of the Nujiang River, whose current elevation is over 4, 500 metres. Although this basin is far from northern India, fossils of fauna have been found similar to those discovered in the Siwalik Hills. This indicates that in the early Pliocene Period, most of the Tibetan Plateau had a similar elevation-about 500-1, 000 metres-to the Siwalik region. Why has it not been possible to find ape fossils on this plateau?

3. Although no fossils have been found on the Tibetan Plateau, the cultural relics of prehistoric beings dating from the Palaeolithic Age to the Neolithic Age have been found all across it. These discoveries have all taken place in the last ten years, and constitute merely the prologue to the archaeological research on Tibetan primitive society. This prologue has already told us that Tibet also was a paradise for primitive man.

4. Modern palaeoanthropologists generally hold that the first hominids, differentiated from apes, appeared about 14 million years

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[1] Xizang Jilongwoma Gonshe Sanzhima Dongwuqun (The Hipparion fauna in Gyirong's Orma commune of Tibet), in *Xizang Gushengwu* (Tibet's prehistoric organisms), vol. 1, Beijing, Scientific Press, 1980.

ago. [1] This was the period of the Tibetan Plateau's fast growth. As the mountains slowly rose, they held back the wet, warm monsoons from the Indian Ocean, changing the local climate and causing great changes in animal and plant life. "This geographical change not only influenced the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, but also the eastern and western continents". [2] Some anthropologists and archaeologists both in China and abroad think that it was this great change on the Tibetan Plateau that forced some apes to leave the forests and learn to walk, and eventually led to their four limbs developing feet and hands. Therefore, the east Asian landmass, including the Tibetan Plateau, was probably the earliest home of man's evolution. This hypothesis is strongly supported by the enormous number of archaeological finds uncovered in recent years by the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Comprehensive Survey Team.

5. The hypothesis that Ramapithecus is one of man's earliest ancestors is being accepted by more and more anthropologists. The countries where fossils have been found include India, Pakistan, Turkey, Kenya, Greece, Hungary and China. If we link these places with a series of straight lines, a triangle emerges stretching from China in the east to Kenya in the south and Hungary in the west. If we say man's earliest birthplace has to fall somewhere in this area, then clearly the Tibetan Plateau is a possibility.

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① Wu Rukang *et al.*, Lama Guyuan he Xiwa Guyuan de Xingtai Tezheng jiqi Xitong Guanxi (The characteristics of the form and structure of Ramapithecus, Sivapithecus and their relations), *Renleixue Xuebao* (Journal of anthropology), vol. 2, 1983.

② See n. 24.

A General Introduction to Tibetan Culture and Religion

The Tibetans, as one of largest ethnic minority groups of China, are well known in the world because of their unique natural environment and distinctive culture and religion. What follows is come background information on Tibetans and their geographic distribution in China prior to a discussion of Tibetan culture and religion.

The Size of the Tibetan Population

The size of the Tibetan population has long been a puzzle to people who study Tibet, because the historical records of Tibetan population are very limited. However, the fourth census of 1990 reported 4.59 million ethnic Tibetans in china.

The populations of ethnic Tibetans are not only small in number, but also widely scattered. We could find Tibetans in all twenty-nine provinces of China; in Beijing we could gather more than 1,000 Tibetans when we celebrate the Tibetan New Year festival. Of course, there is a large Tibetan blood-lineage population living outside of China, including in India, Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan, as well as in

the United States and Switzerland and so on. Unfortunately, most tourists have only been to the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR; "XIZANG" in Mandarin, "U-Tsang" in Tibetan, and "Tibet" in English) and have never been to Tibetan areas in other parts of China such as Sichuan, Gansu, Yunnan, and Qinghai. As result of this, many people know only one part of Tibet: Xizang. Some people cannot believe I am Tibetan because I am not from Xizang; I am from Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Sichuan province. Actually over half (54 percent) of Tibet's(?) total population is distributed outside the Tibet Autonomous Region.

The four ethnic minority areas of northwest China-Tibet, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia (Nei Menggu), and Qinghai-constitute 50 percent of the PRC's entire land mass, but only 4 percent of its total population. According to the 1982 census, the Tibetan Autonomous Region reports only two persons per square kilometer. (Qinghai has five, *Xinjiang has five, Xinjiang has eight*, and Inner Mongolia has sixteen.) By contrast, the southeastern part of China where the Han majority lives has a population density much higher than the ethnic minorities areas of western China. For example, Shandong province reports 485 persons per square kilometer, while Jiangsu has 590, Zhejiang 382 and Guangdong 280.

However, most of the Tibetan population (about 99 percent of the total) is concentrated in the "one region and four provinces" of northwest and southwest China-that is, in the TAR and Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu, and Yunnan provinces (see Table 1).

Just in the TAR, ethnic Tibetans, the largest ethnic group, constituted over 96 percent of the total population, while the Han had only 3.1 percent and others such as the Hui, Menpa, and Lopa ethnic minorities made up only 0.8 percent of the total population in 1990 (see Table 2). During the period from the third (1982) to the fourth

census (1990), the total Tibetan population in China increased form 3.87 to 4.96 million with an annual growth rate of 2.02 percent during those eight years. In the same period, the national annual growth rate for all China was 1.48 percent.

Table 1 The Geographic Distribution of the Tibetan Population

1982 Census: Tibetan Population 3.874.035

Area	No.	%
TAR	1,786,544	45.9
Sichuan	921,984	23.7
Qinghai	753,987	19.6
Gansu	304,573	7.9
Yunnan	95,925	2.5
Total	3,863,013	99.9

1990 Census: Tibetan Population 4,953,330

Area	No.	%
TAR	2,096,346	45.6
Sichuan	1,087,510	23.7
Qinghai	911,860	19.9
Gansu	366.718	8.0
Yunnan	111.444	2.4
Total	4,753,848	99.6

Table 2 Ethnic Composition of the TAR(1985-1993)

Ethnic group	1985		1993	
Area	No.	%	No.	%
Tibetan	1,909,693	95.7	2,206,200	96.4
Han	70,932	3.6	64,890	2.8
Hui	1,592	*	2,091	*
Sharpa	1,403	*	1,718	*
Luopa	2,036	0.1	2,243	0.1
Menpa	6,445	0.3	7,695	0.3
Others	2,770	0.1	4,066	0.2
Total	1,994,871	99.8	2,288,903	99.8

Note: These figures are for the permanently registered population only and exclude those with "temporary" registration, including the military.

* Less than 0.1%

Ethnic Variation and Cultures of Tibet

The Tibetans should be considered a single ethnic group, because they have shared a basic identification culture, meaning a common historical, tradition, language, and religion, and so on, for over 1,000 years. Nevertheless, it is obvious that differences exist among peoples living in various parts and environments of Tibet.

First, in traditional Tibetan cultural geography, Tibet was conventionally divided into three regions, known as the Chol-Kha-gSum—that is, Upper Tibet (western Tibet), which we called Ngari Korsum(now one of seven local districts of the TAR, known as Ali,1,700 kilometers from the capital city Lhasa); central Tibet was called "U-Tsang"("U" means "middle or central," "Tsang" means "clear"), and this region includes the most famous cities and valleys of Tibet

such as Lhasa, Shigatse, Gyantse, and Tsang; eastern Tibet was very complicated and traditionally called Dokham, which combined two regions from Kham and Amdo, but now most of eastern Tibet has been incorporated into Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu, and Yunnan provinces of China, There are two Tibetan autonomous prefectures and one county in the west of Sichuan province-namely, Garze, A-pa, and Muli; there are six Tibetan autonomous prefectures in Qinghai province; and Deqing in Yunnan and Gannan in Gansu.

According to traditional Tibetan documents, central Tibet is a place of religion. However, it is true that Tibetan Buddhism was first introduced to central Tibet from India and developed there. In addition, the first Buddhist monastery was built in central Tibet during the seventh century; it was called Samye Monastery and is now an important tourist place. At the same time, the three largest monasteries of Tibet were located in the capital city of Tibet-Lhasa (Ganden, Drepung, and Sera). Thus, central Tibet is one of most important religious places.

The documents also reported that Amdo is a "place of horses," which means that Amdo is a most important place for nomads. It is true that the Tibetan areas of Qinghai, Sichuan, and the Northern TAR are occupied by many different groups of pastoral nomads, of which the Golog in Qinghai were well known among the Tibetans as a nomadic group. The term "Golog" literally means "heads on backwards", but it is used here symbolically to mean "handsome, warlike, and independent rebels." Early Western researchers who traveled to the region have left a number of descriptions of the nomads. The American explorer Joseph R. Rock *described them thus*: "Such hostile and unfriendly people I have never met anywhere in the world; it seems that a smile never crosses their coarse features", During the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) they were known in the Chinese

documents as "wild Barbarians" and their district was described as "the region beyond the boundaries", However, Golog is now an important Tibetan autonomous prefecture of Qinghai province. The traditional Tibetan nomadic way of life still survives there and is part of present-day Qinghai tourism.

Eastern Tibet is known as Kham and was recorded by traditional Tibetan documents as the "place of man." Traditionally, this area developed many independent kingdoms, such as the kingdoms of Derge and Mining, and so on. The peoples of Kham were called Khampa, and known to be brave, intrepid, physically strong, and handsome. The area was known for successful trade and business since the richest and most famous businessman of Tibet came from Kham. Even today, there are many private wealthy Kham businesses in the capital cities of Sichuan and Tibet. Recently I met a famous Kham businessman in Beijing. He said he has a capital fund with over a hundred million yuan. He set up many enterprises all over, including in Chengdu, Shandong, Qinghai, and Tibet. He told me that he does business and manages his affairs in the same way as other ethnic businessmen. The only difference is that he never sells images of Buddha, Buddhist books, or instruments used for Buddhism, even if there is a possibility to get great benefit from it. Instead, he has donated his whole collection of over two hundred very old images of Buddha to the Potala Palace in Lhasa for no profit. In addition, he has given much money to the monastery and to Tibetan schools. He believes that trading in images of Buddha is an evil sin.

Second, there are so many different kinds of dress, building, customs, and languages in the various areas, that even the question of "who the Tibetans are" is puzzling to many visitors. I myself could understand the Tibetan language of Lhasa, Kham, and the nomads of Qinghai, but could understand nothing of the Gyarong or Minyag

dialects of eastern Tibet. The distinctive local dialects of Qinghai Tibetans are difficult for central Tibetans to understand. In the west of Sichuan, there is a Tibetan group called Minyag, who speak a distinctive language at home, but also know the standard Tibetan language very well when they speak with other Tibetans. It's like being able to understand the Beijing and Sichuan Chinese dialects but not understanding Cantonese. Third, there is a striking contrast between settled agriculturists (rongpa) in southeast Tibet and pastoral nomads (drogpa or drokba) in northwest Tibet. Let us focus on the latter.

The Way of Life of Tibetan Nomads

The pastoral nomads of Tibet live mainly in the northwest Tibetan plateau we call the Changtang region, which occupies nearly 70 percent of the land of the TAR. Sometimes referred to as "the roof of the world," most of it stands over 4,000 meters above sea level. The economy of Tibetan nomads is mainly based on livestock herding, principally yak, sheep, goats, cattle, and horses. Robert Brainerd Ekvall of the United States considers that "without the yak it is questionable whether nomadic pastoralism in Tibet could exist." He goes on to suggest that Tibet nomadic pastoralism was "developed only after the domestication of the yak by farmers who already had common cattle and.., goats and sheep." There is no doubt that Tibet is the original home of the yak. The importance of the yak in Tibetan life is indicated by the fact that the Tibetan nomads' generic term for "yak" is *nor*, which is usually translated as "wealth." The yak is the principal resource unit of the Tibetan nomadic economy.

Yak provide "heavy transportation." They are slow compared to horses, but are extremely powerful and have great endurance even at

the highest altitudes and on the large expanses of snow. They are also the only animals that can carry the nomads' heavy and bulky black-yak-hair tents for long distances. Yak can also be saddled and ridden, and function as a kind of poor man's horse.

Yak provide food, shelter, and clothing for Tibetan nomads, who traditionally live in yak-hair tents made from yak-belly hair. The soft cashmere-like wool called *kulu* is used to make bags, blankets, and ropes. The skin or hide is used for ropes, bags, and boots. Of course, the yak provide large amounts of food, such as meat, cheese, milk, yak butter, and yogurt. Sheep also provide meat, milk, wool, and sheepskin for winter clothing.

Most Tibetan nomads live in the north of Tibet which is called Chantiang. Almost half of this area is part of a depopulated zone of well-known high altitude with climatic conditions that make trees or forests impossible. One problem faced by pastoralists in the northwest of Tibet is a shortage of raw materials like wood for many of the things that they need. The firewood problem is solved in these treeless landscapes by the relative abundance of dried dung. They use yak and sheep dung as fuels for cooking and warming themselves during the eight months of the long winters.

The nomadic peoples of Tibet produce food, clothes, and most of what they need themselves. As Ekvall said, the Tibetan pastoral nomadic subsistence economy "is largely self-contained and self-sufficient." An important economic characteristic of Tibetan nomads is their apparent independent lifestyle, and they are often regarded as prime examples of a self-sufficient society. However, as some researchers have suggested, "pure" pastorals have probably never existed in the world. Actually the nomads of Tibet cannot produce *everything* they need; it is impossible for them to supply, for example, *tsampa*, tea, and basic staple foods for themselves. They get these

staple foods from trade with agriculturists. So pastoral nomadic societies of Tibet have a dual economy: that is, livestock herding and trade. They use the surpluses gained from animal husbandry, such as butter, meat, hides, and wool, to exchange for the products of a different economy through the medium of trade. Traditionally, Tibetan nomads have to carry these surplus livestock products by yak on long-distance travels to southeastern Tibet to make the regular exchange between nomads and farmers. Such travel trade is an important part of Tibetan nomadic life each year.

Still, much of the traditional economy and lifestyle of Tibetan nomads has begun to change since the new economic reform of the 1980s. This change has mainly been caused by direct or indirect commercialization. It is clear that the Tibetan nomads' dependence on markets has increased as a result of market economy development. Nowadays, there is much construction of truck or tractor roads from most local camp sites and townships to county headquarters, and from counties to the market centers, and even regular bus transport from county to county. The different ethnic traders include the Han, the Tibetans, as well as the Hui (Muslims), who nowadays can easily bring grain, tea, and commodities needed by the nomads to them. There are also more and more nomads who can easily take yak butter, meat, wool, and even live sheep and yak to be sold in town or market centers. Of course, traditional Tibetan nomads lack business skills and would like to produce everything they need themselves.

The problem is that more and more nomads are tempted by the new commodity and truck trade. They tend to use modem items, such as cars, tractors, wristwatches, tape recorders, steel stoves, machines for milking, and new clothes. Since they can't produce these commodities themselves, they have to buy them from the market, and they are willing to trade extra livestock to obtain them. In this way, a

growing amount of the nomad's income and access to articles for daily use depends on the market. Therefore commoditization and trading skills are likely to increase in importance in the future as the Tibetan nomads gain familiarity with the consequences and growth of the new market economy in Tibet.

By definition, pastoral nomadism in Tibet is an economic system of seasonal movement of both people and livestock. Most nomads in Tibet may move only two to four times a year between winter, spring, summer, and fall encampments as a result of limited grassland. In some parts of west Tibet there are pastoral nomads who may move as often as ten or even twenty times a year with their livestock between different pastures. The winter encampment is the main home or base encampment where they must live for six or seven months. In the summer (July or August), they make their major migration, leaving their home winter base for summer or fall pasture areas, usually one to three days' walk away. Their annual movement is only ten to forty miles. However, in eastern Tibet, the seasonal migrations only cover a few miles.

Buddhism in Tibetan Life

The Tibetan people practice a religion known as Lamaism. It is actually one branch of the school of Mahayana Buddhism, commonly called Lamaism, and we call it Tibetan Buddhism. It was introduced into Tibet from India, China, and Central Asia during the seventh century. It is a combination of two dominant schools of thought: Madhyamika, which is typified by meditation and spiritual psychic experiences; and Yogacara, which is typified by philosophy and theoretical discussion.

Toward the end of the ninth century C. E. the translation into Tibetan of the sacred books—the Kanjur and the Tanjur—was

completed. After assimilating the earliest form of worship in Tibet known as Bon, Tibetan Buddhism developed into Lamaism.

Tibetan Buddhism

There are four major sects: (a) the Sa-sKya-Pa school received its name from the monastery of Sa-sKya in the west of Tibet, and was founded in 1073. The central concepts of Sa-sKya-Pa teaching are obviously derived from the "thought-only" teachings of the Yogacara. They first set up religious political power to dominate the whole of Tibet; (b) the bKa'-brGud-Pa school is based on the oral tradition of its gurus (leader or teachers), with teachings passed on from teacher to disciple by word of mouth. The sect was founded 1012-98; (c) the rNYing-Ma-Pa is the only school of Tibetan Buddhism which may lay claim to an origin earlier than the "second propagation of the doctrine"; (d) the dGe-Lugs-Pa is the most recently founded and most politically predominant sect. Its doctrinal passages concern the notion of "absolute reality" (nirvana) that corresponds to the goal of individual release from present sufferings and the cycles of sex and rebirth (gods or titans, humans, animals, hungry ghosts, demons, and hell) through meditation and accumulation of good deeds (karma).

Lamaism takes its name from the role played by a person's lama, who serves as that individual's spiritual teacher. Indeed, the Tibetan term "lama" means a person's spiritual master or teacher, who plays an important role among Tibetan Buddhists. As the Tibetan proverb says, "there is no approach to god, unless a lama leads the way." Lamas also have very high position in Tibetan society. It can be said that there is no teacher, artist, doctor, writer except the lama in traditional Tibetan society. However, Lamaism profoundly influenced all the institutions and lifestyles of Tibet. Some researchers even claim

that if you don't understand Lamaism, you will find it hard to understand Tibetan culture and society. It might be true that traditional Tibetan society was strongly governed by Buddhism, as the people's ideology, values, and actions were controlled by lamaism. Actually, traditional Tibetan government integrated political and religious power, and for a long time it has been headed by the incarnated Dalai Lama.

It is the traditional custom for Tibetan people with important problems to ask the lama's advice in making final decisions, including when to marry, when to leave home for an extended period or on long-distance travel, or what to do when they are robbed, or get sick, or when a family member dies, or when they have disputes with people or groups that they cannot resolve themselves. Even the names of most Tibetan people are taken from Buddhist scriptures.

The function of a lama in Tibetan society can be summarized as follows: first, he must teach Buddhist Sanskrit scriptures and literacy. Traditionally, there were very few schools in Tibet outside the monastery. If a Tibetan male wanted to become an intellectual, he had to seek admission to a monastery. It was customary for a boy to be received into the monastery at the age of seven or eight. He was dressed in monastic red clothing, and his head was shaved. The boy received a new regional name. It was important for such new students to find a very good lama as their teacher. Then they were taught reading and writing under strict monastic rule, but mostly they would memorize the scriptures. This was my own experience when young; I had to memorize from twenty to even a hundred pages each day. If you forgot one sentence or even one word when you were reciting from memory in front of your lama teacher you were punished with a whip. After two or three years of elementary training, young boys took the vow we called Getsul, which marks the first stage of the monastic life.

When they reached eighteen or twenty, the young men might take the second stage vow, or Gelong, meaning that they had completed their higher studies and become a formal lama. But there is still a very long way ahead to continue study to get the higher degree called Geshe. Different lamas take different times to get the geshe degree, and some even devote all their lives to such studies. However, winning the higher Geshe degree gives you a higher position both in the monastery and in society, and you have the right to choose whether to remain in the monastery for life, or retire to some remote place to meditate, or become a lama teacher. It is even possible for you to be an incarnation lama after death.

Of course, nowadays, there are many different levels of school in Tibet, including university, high school, and primary school. Most teachers of these schools graduated from college and university. But there are still many Tibetan children who choose to go to the monastery to study Buddhism.

A second important social function of these lamas was the "divination of good and evil fortune"; in other words, through divination they provided answers to important matters, foretold the future, and foresaw good and evil fortune in order to instruct people on how to embrace or avoid such futures. The Tibetan lama used many forms of divination. Here are just a few of them: (a) divination by casting dice, where an odd figure would have auspicious significance, while an even figure would indicate misfortune; (b) divination by simple counting of beads in a rosary (108), determining good fortune by odd numbers and bad or evil phenomena by even numbers. This was also practiced by many elderly laymen; (c) divination by looking at images in a bronze mirror, called Pra-PHab. For example, the image of a dying or drying tree would indicate different diseases, while the opposite, a flourishing forest (or many trees) or flowers would

indicate richness. Images of a fight between two birds indicated war or fighting.

A third major social role of the lama was to combat natural disasters such as heavy snow and hail, and ask for rain during dry weather. As you may know, hail has always been one of the worst natural disasters in the areas populated by the Tibetans. Consequently, there was a hail-prevention-lama called "A-nye" who had the responsibility for organizing all members of villages to perform hail-fighting magic when a hailstorm disaster was coming. However, with the development of the natual sciences in Tibet, they have now developed cloud-seeding techniques for fighting hailstorms, so the A-nye lama has become jobless.

A fourth, general, function of the lamas was to pray every day to gain happiness and avoid misfortune for a village or district, or even for all the people in the world. They worked as intermediaries between gods and men. They would enact special religious rites to pray for the safety of their tribes or villages. They would pray for the flourishing of the herds and rich harvests. Tibetan people believe that all disease is the work of demons and malignant spirits or maybe ghosts. Religious ceremonies enter a great deal into the treatment of sickness in Tibet. However, every doctor in Tibet is a lama. They treat sickness and disease with both religious ceremonies and medical science. It is customary in Tibet that when a person gets sick, a lama is first invited for divination and prayer. Lama doctors generally diagnose by feeling the pulse and testing or checking the urine. They believe there are six pulses, each connected with a major internal organ, such as the heart, the lungs, or the liver. In the past, it can be said that for most sickness, Tibetans put more faith in prayers, charms, and amulets than in medicine. However, modern medicine and hospitals are now in widespread use throughout Tibet, and many more young people

have been trained at the Tibetan Medical College to become the new generation of Tibetan doctors, although they are not lamas.

When Tibetans get married, they also need to ask many things of the lama as astrologer. First the lama is consulted about the birth years. If the girl was born in one of the fire years, it is not possible for her to marry a boy born in a water year since fire and water are believed to be incompatible. However, one born in an earth year would find one born in a wood year suitable for marriage because wood needs soil to grow. The lama would also help people to choose a lucky wedding day. Finally, when a person dies, as many lamas as possible are in-vited to the house to assist the soul of the dead person to leave the corpse peacefully and be rebirthed or reincarnated through the religious rite of the Phowa or "passing ceremony." This rite would instruct the dead person on how to conduct him or herself on the road to rebirth. The lama would also decide how long the corpse should remain in the house and what was the best way to bury it. There are many kinds of burial in Tibet, including fiver-burial, cremation, earth-burial, and stupa-burial.

Marriage and Family Structure

As the American researcher Melvyn C. Goldstein has said, "one of the most interesting but misunderstood facets of traditional Tibetan social organization is marriage and the family." It is true that both polyandrous and monogamous families are to be found among people of Tibetan culture, but the great majority are monogamous.

Polyandrous Marriage

According to our fieldwork, there are different forms of polyandrous family practiced in Tibet. Normally, it is fraternal polyandry, in which a group of brothers marry one woman. The

question is how did the polyandrous family exist until now? For what reason do several brothers share one wife and one house in one family?

A Tibetan family is a basic economic unit in which each member of the family is responsible for a specific kind of task. In this case, fraternal polyandry is encouraged in order to increase male labor within the family for economic benefit. These brother-husbands participate in different tasks under polyandry. If the youngest brother becomes a monk, the others do business, farming, or herding, particularly nowadays, as there are so many things to do in the division of family labor. It is clear that there is close relation between the number of brothers in the family and the economic success of the unit. Polyandry is well adapted to different economic tasks. Traditionally, forms of marriage in Tibet and the land-tenure system are closely linked. The land is nontransferable and is tied to the family name from generation to generation. By custom, only fathers and sons have the right to inherit property or land; women have no right to land even when they have a noble title. Under such rules of land and property succession, polyandry is the only possible way for a family to pass its land and other important property to the next generation if they have no sons. On the other hand, polyandry can prevent the splitting up of limited property, including land and domestic animals. People want to keep the family land from being broken up. In polyandrous marriages the wife exercises great influence over her several husbands and completely controls her household. In the traditional ideology or values of Tibetans, polyandry was regarded as best and this form of marriage or family was idealized although Tibetans are aware of the difficulty surrounding it. It is usually "praiseworthy" if the wife can harmonize all the brothers in one household. Hence, fraternal polyandry has a profound effect on women's economic and social roles as well as on the people's attitude

toward the wife.

Changing Family Patterns

Anthropological comparative data show that most societies have small, nuclear families or households comprising parents and children; these are two generations in what are called husband-and-wife families. There seem to be very few extended families in modem society. However, explaining family and household composition is a subject of continuing scholarly debate. In recent years, we have extensively studied the changing strategies of Tibetan family systems in response to new economic reform policy. Our findings suggest that: (1) in different historical periods, nuclear families have always been the dominant pattern; (2) extended families have also been important in Tibetan family structure, particularly after 1980, when the number of extended families increased sharply. It is clear from our fieldwork data, that there is no single factor that explains why Tibetans would choose the extended family as a basic unit of economy and life. Rather, a number of factors appear to be responsible for those family changes.

First, it seems that the new economic reforms after 1980 concerning ownership of land and livestock shifted the role of the family as an economic unit and are the primary source of changes in family pattern. The family as a basic economic unit needed enough members for the division of labor so that a different economic program could be carded out. The extended family provided the benefits of shared expenses, labor, security, and so on. In particular, rural families welcomed additional children to increase the work force.

Next, it should be noted that the policy of birth control was not enforced among Tibetans, and there was less emphasis on the birth-control policy in Tibetan rural areas than in the lowlands of China.

Our data show that Tibetan nomads knew about the birth-control policy but did not carry it out until recently. The mode of production in Tibet's rural areas has not changed for centuries. Although certain kinds of machines, such as milk separators, trucks, and tractors have been introduced, the size of the labor force and its strength still decide the wealth of each family. Our fieldwork data show that families with more members and a strong labor force are much better off than those with few members and a weak labor force. In short, the subsistence economy still relies heavily on labor strength in the rural areas of Tibet, which favors extended families. Even today, there are few nonfarming enterprises to attract labor away from rural families. By contrast, in cities like Lhasa and Shigatse, extended family incidence sharply decreased. The resurgence of the extended family is not merely a response to the new economic reforms; it is also an indication of the revitalization of the traditional Tibetan lifestyle which is driven by traditional Tibetan ideologies. According to historical records, the ideal Tibetan family pattern was three generations living in one household, and it was believed that a large family would bring good luck and prosperity.

As it is an important traditional custom for Tibetan people to have all members of a family live in one home, they need their houses to be built as large as possible. I met many Tibetan traders in Lhasa who came from my hometown. The first goal of making money or engaging in trade is so that they can extend their houses. A house or tent is not just for living, but is a symbol of culture, reputation, or wealth.

Actually you can see all of Tibetan culture in the process of setting up a house or building, and this might be a good way to conclude.

First, they ask a geomancer to find a good location for their house (or tomb) since they believe the location will have a strong influence

on the fortunes of the family.

Second, Tibetans believe all land is under the land god called Sa-bDag. So, you have to conduct a religious ceremony for the land god before you begin to build your house. You put many kinds of food and clothing into a pottery jar, cover it, and position it under the site where you plan to build.

Third, this is an important time for all members of a village to help each other with no concern for remuneration.

Fourth, generally, the walls are made of stamped earth, and the process of constructing a wall of stamped earth will always be accompanied by song and dance. A distinctive feature of Tibetan culture is that any labor or work will be accompanied by singing and dancing.

Finally, it is customary for people to build their houses facing south to make the most of the sunshine and avoid the cold wind from the north. It is not customary for most Tibetan families to live on the ground floor, which is reserved for animals. Generally, they occupy the second floor with the kitchen always forming the center of the home. The chapel, bedrooms, and storerooms surround the kitchen. The chapel sometimes will be on the third floor as it is a room for religious practice. However, there are different house structures in different districts of Tibet. In central Tibet, such as around Lhasa, you might see only one-story houses surrounded by beautiful courtyards which serve as convenient places for planting flowers and vegetables and keeping animals. You can see what kind of art they like from the way in which they paint their houses.

Introduction to *Nomads of Tibet*

For Westerners, the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau on which Tibetan herders live has always been surrounded by a unique aura of mystery. They are drawn, almost to the point of intoxication, by this "summit of a thousand mountains and source of ten thousand waters" in the heartland of Asia, and a good many Westerners are in tacit agreement in regarding this "barren" plateau as virgin soil for anthropology, as a target for exploration, and as a rich garden for research. One after another, they have barged into this "last stretch of Sukhavati [pure land] unsullied by modern civilization"

But very few of the researchers of former days were successful. They learned that the Tibetan herders of these sacred mountains and lakes, who had never before seen the foreign guns borne by these Westerners, were unable to get along with the latter and even rejected them as a consequence of long-term isolation from the rest of the world. If there were any who could claim success, their gains are represented by the lengthy "travel notes", "travel accounts", "exploration records" and suchlike that to this day fill people with a sense of mystery. I have read a number of such travel accounts in the American Library of Congress and the Indiana University Library. Not

a few of them describe the discoveries made by successful researchers and provide later generations with leads for research. Other authors of such books provide readers with some useful enlightenment.

Most of them, however, hunt for exotica, and their objective is merely to excite people's curiosity about the Tibetan herders rather than to provide any true understanding of these nomads. Some of them patently wear the colored spectacles of Western ethnocentrism when observing and recording the society of Tibetan herders, and use their own cultures as yardsticks when assessing the Tibetan herders' cultural values. As a result, all they saw, apart from barren scenes of nature, was a fearsome world of "barbaric bandits." What they lacked was a rigorously scientific attitude and fair and impartial observation. Of course, there were also those who were disgusted and weary of the selfishness and the mutual suspicions and deceptions of Western civilized existence, and who came among the Tibetan herdsmen to find an emotional haven and spiritual sustenance; they yearned for the Tibetan herders' ancient lifestyle that was so natural, simple, and unaffected. They even described this piece of land, about which they knew nothing, as an ideal world where no social differentiation, no oppression, and no struggle existed: a Shangri-la. In sum, by the 1940s, people's cognizance and understanding of this "land of mountain gods" had not gone much deeper than a century earlier. The impression left of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau on people was of a desert world of impenetrable mysteries.

In 1950, Tibet was peacefully liberated, and the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau for the first time opened it doors wide to scientists. New China's first batch of scientifically trained new-generation scholars entered the Tibetan pastoral areas in an organized and planned manner and for the first time in history conducted a relatively profound and systematic survey of the region. They assembled a vast amount of

firsthand materials and wrote a number of investigative reports, among them the four investigative reports included in the third edition of the Survey of Tibetan Society and History published in 1987 by the Tibet People's Publishing House. These investigative reports provided valuable materials and important leads for later studies into the society and history of the Tibetan nomadic tribes. There is no doubt that the results of their researches are very valuable. Regrettably, such investigations and studies were not continued in proper fashion, and the damage caused, in the meantime, by ten or more years of the "Great Cultural Revolution" brought such research to a complete halt.

In 1980, I was studying for a master's degree at the Postgraduate Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and was given the opportunity to return to Seda county, the Tibetan pastoral area in western Sichuan where I had once worked for eight years, to conduct an anthropological field investigation. In 1986, my work place in the China Tibetology Research Center was set up and took the lead in organizing cooperative studies on Tibet's feudal serf society. Experts on the topics coordination committee maintained that it was necessary to conduct a fairly detailed and in-depth supplementary investigation into the society and history of the pastoral regions of northern Tibet. As deputy chief of the topics investigation team, I accepted this task and in the summer of 1987 went with three companions to the North Tibet Plateau (Nag-Chu) that I had long looked forward to visiting. Thereafter, I become enamored with Tibet's nomadic culture, and for the next decade and more have roamed the Tibetan pastoral regions in such places as Gansu, Qinghai, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Tibet proper. The theses and reports now presented before the reader are only a portion of the results of our investigations.

It must be explained here that the methods we used during our investigations were basically those of cultural anthropological field

investigation—in other words, collecting firsthand information through on-the-spot investigations, participant observation, and interviews. After the investigations, the materials obtained were repeatedly verified, classified, and sorted, and finally written up into an investigative report. After the printing of the first draft, opinions were widely solicited and, on this basis, repeated revisions and rechecking followed. Years elapsed before the reports presently before the reader took final shape. Although there still are many deficiencies in them, they are, after all, the first fairly systematic and scientific investigative reports that record and provide information on the society and history of the Tibetan herders. I am confident that their publication will be of benefit in correctly understanding the traditional Tibetan herders' society and the changes that are now taking place in it.

I wish to state here that I did not find any "monsters" that deserve to be regarded with alarm when I entered the Tibetan herdsmen's society, nor did I feel that there were any supernatural "mysteries" there. What I found were people like us, people who have human feelings like ourselves, and who, like us, seek happiness and struggle for their survival. Since the reform and opening to the outside of the 1980s, in particular, they too yearn for a modernized way of life. The market-economy principles now universal to the whole world are gradually changing some of their features, and it is a pity that there are far from enough descriptions of these changes in our reports. They also have their beliefs and their customs, the key differences being that some unique traits are to be found in the religions they adhere to, in their way of life, and in the values they hold.

Some Background Notes for the Reader

(1) As many people know, feudal serfdom is a phase of development in the successive changes of human society; it is one of the "three forms of bondage peculiar to the three major periods of the era of civilization" (i. e., slavery, serfdom, and wage labor). The social systems of this form of bondage all took shape in agricultural regions, whether in medieval Europe, or during the Western Zhou to the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods in ancient China. Marxists based their concept of serfdom primarily on the circumstances of agricultural serfs. As Lenin said, "The basic feature of serfdom is that the peasants (peasants made up the great majority of the population at the time, and the urban population was very small) were tied to the land; such is the provenance of the concept of serfdom."① He also said: "The condition for this economic system was the peasants' physical attachment to the landowner."② It is evident, therefore, that the emergence of serfdom was very closely related to the peasantry and that the concept of serfdom appeared with the appearance of peasants. So, what was the feudal serfdom of the nomadic tribes like? What similarities or differences were there between the serfdom of nomadic society and serfdom in agricultural regions? Owing to the lack of sufficient materials in this respect at the time, Marx, Engels, and Lenin did not leave us cut-and-dried answers to these questions. One can well say that research on feudal society conducted by China's social science circles have obtained

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① *Collected Works of Lenin*, vol. 4, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1972, p. 50.

② *Collected Works of Lenin*, vol. 3, Beijing: People's Publishing House, 1972, p. 158.

brilliant results, but they have done less research on serfdom, and the existing studies are based principally on materials on agricultural peoples and agricultural regions, and fewer still are the investigative reports on feudal serfdom among the nomadic tribes.

Judging from the limited amount of current research results, although the feudal societies among the nomadic tribes in China's ethnic minority regions bore, on the whole, some of the basic characteristics of feudal society, they nonetheless possessed some features that differed from those in the agricultural regions. China's academic circles have discussed such questions as whether nomadic people passed through slave society, and whether the relationship between herd owners and hired herdsmen possessed some of the characteristics of the capitalist system of employment. That these questions were put forward at all shows the uniqueness of nomadic society. So, what, in the final analysis, are the unique characteristics of nomadic society? I believe our investigative reports indubitably provide important and valuable firsthand materials for researching such issues.

(2) To counter the theory advanced by bourgeois historians and social ideologues that the system of private ownership is "self-evident" and "only right and proper;" Marx attempted to resolve, in line with the basic principles of materialist dialectics, the issue of the emergence of private ownership during changes in the formation of human society. He maintained that the system of private ownership was an inevitable product of a given phase in human society that private ownership originally developed out of the primitive system of public ownership, and that human society would ultimately and inevitably enter a higher form of public ownership: communism. However, the history of primitive society presented an inexplicable and confusing picture at the time because of the lack of evidence that

could stand up to inspection. Still, Marx had profound faith in his own theoretical designs and reasoning.

In order to reconstruct the primary form of human society prior to the system of private ownership, he postulated that "the first form of ownership system" in human society was "the tribal ownership system."① However, due to the limitations of materials available at the time, there was not yet enough evidence to say what exactly was the primary form of tribal ownership, and it was only two years before he passed away that Marx discovered Lewis Henry Morgan's work *Ancient Society*. With great enthusiasm, he read and studied this immortal work and wrote "A Summary of Morgan's Ancient Society." On this basis, Engels completed his book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, in which he summed up the characteristics of various Indian tribes in the Americas, and established the fact that the ethnic community prior to class society was the tribe, and that the system of public ownership of the means of production, based on the tribe, was the initial form of private ownership in human society. Thus, researching tribal society became an important part of studies on primitive society. Anthropology's investigative materials show that many places in the world still had ancient tribal communities before they came into contact with Europeans. Many people today may know about the Indian tribes of the Americas, the Australian tribes, and the hunting tribes of Africa, but they may not necessarily know about the nomadic tribes of Tibet. In our reports, we devote a good deal of effort to describing the historical evolution of the Tibetan nomad tribes, their organization and structure, their cooperative alliances, their divisions and

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① *Collected Works of Marx and Engels*, vol. 1 Beijing: People's PublishingHouse, 1972, p. 26.

development, and their characteristic of simultaneous emergence and existence of the tribes' public ownership system and the overlords' private ownership system. Although the Tibetan nomad tribes we investigated had already entered the portals of class society, remnants of the features of primitive tribes were everywhere to be seen.

Among some of the tribes in the Washu Sethar pastoral region, in particular, we could sense, albeit only faintly, that class divisions had appeared among them not so long ago. Before 1950, the traditional customs of primitive times still were in evidence, where "the powerful set themselves up as chieftains whereas the weak are subjugated" and "violence is employed by all, and the strongest gain the upper hand." These were, at the time, some of the reasons for the chaotic public order in the Tibetan pastoral areas. Among the Tibetan tribes where territorial relations took precedence, one still found not a few vestiges of blood-line relationships. The emphasis on inheritance is one example. Through heredity, the headmen of some tribes enjoyed various feudal prerogatives, whereas democratically elected natural leaders still had a part to play. Although the suzerain system of ownership had been established over the pastures—the economic lifeline of the nomad tribes—the occupation and use of the pastures was still demarcated and shared along tribal lines. The ancient concept of tribal pastures being sacred and inviolable, and of every member of the tribe having the sacred duty of protecting the tribal pastures from incursions, was deeply imprinted on the minds of the herdsmen.

In sum, the primitive vestiges of the tribal ownership system existed in tandem with the feudal serf system and constituted one of the major characteristics of pre-1950 Tibetan nomad society. Analyzing and studying the primitive tribal remnants in this society are undoubtedly of major value for comprehending the original form of

primitive tribal society. Exploring the evolution of tribes and the emergence of bondage are even more interesting topics, and are some of the reasons for our investigations into Tibet's nomad society.

(3) The Tibetan nomad regions cover a wide area and basically consist of a vast, contiguous area of grassland stretching from Ngari in western Tibet to *Songpan* and *Aba* in the northwest of Sichuan and to the Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in the southern part of Gansu. Large and small Tibetan nomad tribes are scattered everywhere over this extensive stretch of grasslands and no one has ever counted how many of them there are. Starting in 1980, I went successively to two Tibetan autonomous prefectures at *Aba* and *Ganzi* in the northwestern part of Sichuan, the Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu, the Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, and the Haixi Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai, and the Nagchu and Ali regions in Tibet.

The overall impression I received was that the Tibetans' nomadic culture is more unified and uniform than that of the agricultural areas. The relatively similar Amdo and Khampa dialects of Tibetan are spoken in most of the pastoral regions. A herdsman from Qinghai traveling to Nagchu in Tibet can at once communicate with a Nagchuk herdsman there, and a herdsman from the southern part of Gansu speaks basically the same language as a herdsman from the northwestern part of Sichuan and encounters no linguistic hindrances.

Much too is similar in terms of everyday life. For instance, all Tibetan herdsmen, irrespective of where they are, live in black-yak-hair tents. In terms of production, it is quite common for all of them to combine seasonal peregrinations in pursuit of water and grass with permanent settlement in winter. All live mainly by raising yak and sheep. The furniture and vessels they use in everyday life were made chiefly out of leather and wood, and virtually no pottery utensils were

used. Their clothing was made mostly from yak and sheep hides. Men and women, young and old, all wore fur gowns and fur hats. Men favored clothing and accessories that manifested a dashing and martial spirit, whereas women went in for resplendent garments that created an air of quality and prosperity.

Households were for the most part of the monogamous, extended-family type. Work was divided according to gender and age, with men taking charge of matters outside the family, and women, domestic affairs. Households were self-sufficient, with exchanges—mainly of the barter type—of agricultural or animal husbandry goods to supplement everyday needs and finances. Such transactions, however, placed more emphasis on honor than on profit.

People lived in tribal communities, divided into smaller groups for dispersed herding of flocks. They regarded the tribe (Tshowa or Shokhag) as a community that served the dual purpose of providing the individual with material support and spiritual sustenance. This was perhaps because the powers of the individual seem so frail in the boundless wastelands. People could only survive in such arduous conditions by relying on, and cooperating with, one another, which is why they placed importance on community awareness.

Submitting to the community and upholding the community were the traditional criteria for people's behavior. They abhorred selfishness, greed, and sloth, but revered the collective, valued honesty, practiced restraint, and advocated industriousness. They were also militant and warlike; all healthy males were at the same time warriors, ready to mount their horses at a moment's notice and race across the broad grasslands, assembling and scattering so rapidly that opponents were helpless to deal with them.

Yet they were as submissive as sheep before the gods. They worshipped the mountain gods, put their trust in Buddhism and the

Bon religion, emphasized cause and effect and fate, and believed in heaven and hell. They were willing to spend their wealth on their faith, and set no store by accumulation of property or investment in production. Covetous merchants were a despised class of persons in the traditional nomad society. In contrast, sorcerers adept in magical skills and courageous warrior heroes were objects of respect and praise. Generosity and brave actions for just causes won prestige and authority, which were more important to them than wealth.

They were not accustomed to yielding to external pressure, but the regularities of social development were not subject to their will and they were forced to submit to one such external pressure—oppression and exploitation by the three feudal overlords represented by the former government, temples and monasteries, and the aristocracy. Traditional value concepts were employed to bolster the system of bondage. The spirit of industry, forbearance, and submissiveness brought the herdsmen endless travails. Governments and hereditary headmen emerged above the tribes. The pressures in different regions varied, as did the degree of exploitation, but there is no doubt that all people were caught up in the web of one social pattern: serfdom.

Due to reasons of history and environment, disparities can be discerned among the social cultures of different regions—disparities that constitute subcultures of an overarching common culture. Such differences are to be found between the northern and southern areas of north Tibet. The Amdodoma tribes in the northern area moved about frequently in search of water and grass all year round, some as often as several dozen times. Their cohesion and doughtiness intimidated even the local Tibetan government which, apart from levying symbolic corvees and taxes on them once a year, dared not interfere too much with them, leaving them to exist as semi-independent border tribes. In the southern *Dangxiong* region, however, many tribes were broken up

by Lhasa's three overlords into manors and pastures under different owners who exercised direct management over them, and the herdsmen were forced to undertake many internal and external corvees.

The vast majority of the pastures were divided up and ruled by these three overlords, leaving the herdsmen to live a semi-settled, semi-nomadic life on a small number of pastures and to move about at most three or four times a year. In contrast, the grasslands in northwestern Sichuan were known as a "region beyond the pale" and famed for their warlike population as well as brigands. The rulers of the Yuan, Ming, Qing, and Nationalist governments were unable to extend their whips to this area, and government decrees were ineffective, giving the region the reputation of an area "beyond the reach of government power."

What resulted was an independent tribal community formed of a natural alliance of forty-eight tribes. Class division slowly took place within this community, but its members never paid external corvees and taxes. In an environment of long-term, virtual isolation from the world, they developed a strong perception of self-determination as well as a disposition marked by ruggedness and defiance in face of suppression. Organizationally, they were bound consanguineous and territorial links. Even up to the year 1950, no administrative institutions had been set up in the region, and its patriarchal rule and tribal system remained virtually untouched.

(4) Between 1988 and 1997 I visited the United States on a number of occasions. There, the Indian tribal culture of the Morgan era had long since been submerged and wiped out by modern capitalism. Today, it is impossible to foresee whether several decades from now we shall be able to obtain the materials on tribal culture we have already assembled in the Tibetan pastoral areas, because the

traditional cultures of all peoples are bound to undergo change. For this reason, I feel strongly that we have the duty and responsibility to accurately record these valuable historical experiences for the benefit of later generations. The ten papers and investigation reports we have put together here are an attempt to paint a portrait of some of the traditional societies and histories of the Tibetan pastoral areas. We leave the reader to comment on whether the portraits are true to life!

(5) The authors of these papers and reports are of Tibetan, Hui, and Han ethnicity, and the majority of them have undergone fairly rigorous training in anthropology or ethnology. We are also members of research topic groups that have frequently gone to the Tibetan pastoral areas to conduct on-the-spot field investigations. The purpose of "A General Introduction to Tibetan Culture and Religion," the first of the ten papers and investigative reports presented here, is to give the readers, especially Western readers, a general understanding of Tibet's basic circumstances. I am aware that the changes in Tibet's pastoral areas since the Reform era of the 1980s, or the implementation of the market economy, are issues of concern for anthropological studies of Tibet. Special attention is given to the effect of reforms upon the Tibetan herders who are thought to have retained the greatest amount of traditional culture. In terms of general anthropological theory, modernization, conversion to a market economy, and industrialization are bound to secularize a traditional society, converting a traditional society into a modern society.

However, some American anthropologists believe that after the 1980s, a revitalization movement of the traditional culture has emerged in Tibet, the contents of which include the privatization of property (division of property to the household), the renaissance of religion, and so forth. Some scholars even maintain that, since the disbanding of the people's communes and the privatization of livestock

in the early 1980s, the life of the herdsmen has shown a tendency to revert to traditional ways. At the same time, there are also people who worry lest Tibet's traditional culture might vanish, and they even raise the issue of protecting it.

What, then, is the true situation? Articles and reports such as "Economic Reforms and Their Effects on Household Patterns of Tibetan Nomads," "A New Strategy and an Old Place: The Effects of China's Regional Development Policies on a Drokba Community in Tibet," and "Marital Payments: The Case of Tibetan Nomads," and "A Nomadic Community of Eastern Tibet: The Washu Sethar" (which will appear in Fall 2002, vol. 35, no. 1), based on firsthand materials from community investigations, fairly objectively answer questions of this type from different angles—the family, social structure, clothing and accessories, women's issues, and so forth. Our conclusion is clear-cut and unequivocal: traditions still exist, but change is inevitable.

In terms of their own wishes, the Tibetan people want traditions, but the desire for modernization is universal. The changes in the Tibetan herders' way of life has just begun and will pick up speed along with the development of the market economy and the accelerated pace and intensity of opening to the outside world. A great many factors, including state policy, are helping to bring about these changes, but the fundamental factor is the open market economy.

Four Types Koradji of Tibetan Bon Shamanism

Tibetan culture is largely built on the traditional belief systems Bon[1] shamanism and Tibetan Buddhism. Bon is one of archaian religion before Buddhism intruduced into Tiebt. It also is one of oldest spiritual tradition of Tibet and can be described as the shamanistic and animistic tradition of the Himalayas prior to Buddhism's rise to prominence in the seventh century. After Bon come into close contact with Tibetan Buddhism, the Bon tradition was initiated as the fifth principal Spiritual School in Tibetan Buddhism along with Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu and Gelug.

This paper aims to present a preliminary exploration of different Bon koradjis and their craft by making use of data collected in field studies among my home town Ganzi in Kham. According to Bon ancient books (Klu-' Bun-dKar-Nag-Khra-gSum), Bon koradji or gshen will be discussed in roughly four categories: Phywa-gShen, vPhrul-gShen, vDur-gShen and sNang-gShen.

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[1] Wan Sen, *Xizang Fojiao Fazhan Shilue* (An Outline Introduction to History of Tibetan Buddhism) , China social science publishing company, 1987.

Four categories of Bon koradji

Category 1) The Phywa-gShen

The social function of Phywa-gShen is mainly "divination of good and evil fortune."①They were described in the work *Pis-med Chos-kyi 'byung-gnas mDo-Tsam Smos-Pa Blo-gSal mGrin-Pa'i-mDzes-rGyan* (A General Description of the Wise Founders of various Religions) as those "who based themselves in the realms of man, god and ghost to take auspices regarding existence and death. ②" In other words, they were those who through divination provided answers to important matters, foretold the future, and foresaw good and evil fortune in order to instruct people in how to embrace or to avoid such futures. For example, three koradjis who were said to possess wondrous powers were invited from Shang-Shung after the death of king Gri-Gum bTsan-Po of Tubo (The Kingdom of seventh century Tibet). The first was capable of invoking the Fire God and curing people by causing them to bleed. The second flew through the sky riding a drum and also possessed the power of cutting up iron with a feather. The third could divine crime and sin, truthfulness and falsehood with beads of five-color and red wheat straw. ③ These three belonged to the Phy-gShen category of koradji as were the mDun-Na-'don or sKu-Bon who served in ancient Tibet as astrological diviners who determined the will of the gods and took auspices near the presence of the bTsan-Po. The gNas-

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① Wan Sen, *Xizang Fojiao Fazhan Shilue* (An Outline Introduction to History of Tibetan Buddhism), China social science publishing company, 1987.

② The Eminent Monk Yon-ton rgya-mtsho of Dpal-spung: Pis-med Chos-kyi, Byung-gnas mDo-tsam, Chinese traslation by Liu Liqian, *Kang Zang Yanjiu Yuekan* (Kham and Tibetan Studies Monthly), vol. 26, 1949.

③ "Thu'u-bkwan-Blo-bZang-Chos-Kyi-Nyi-Ma, Grub-mTha'-Thams-Cad-Shel-Gyi-Me-Long", Chinese traslation by Liu Liqian, Xizang people publishing company, 1985.

Chung who served as an oracle in an office close to the Dalai Lama, was also of this category of Bon koradjis coming down from ancient times and undergoing subsequent changes.

Bon koradjis divined in various ways. Some used milticolored ribbons (now replaced by hose lace) to determine the nature of an omen by deciding whether the knot made in a ribbon or string untied smoohtly or not. Divination by castint dies, prevalent even today among practitioners of Lamaism, was also employed: an odd figure would have auspicious significance, while an even figure indicated misfortune. Scapulamancy was also practiced, with the future being divined according to the readings of cracks in the fire-caked animal scapulas. Anther common divination method is the simple counting of beads in a rosary, thereby determining good fortune (odd numbers) and evil phenomena, such as the images said to appear in a bronze mirror or on a person's thumb. This was called pr phab or pr mo, and was practiced by many Bon witches, according to whom, the image of a withered tree would indicate the onslaught of various diseases, a flourishing forest would indicate wealth while a fight between the birds indicated war, etc. It was a popular practice among Tibetans to determine their luck by listening to the utterances of animals. The cries of magpies and cuckoos were considered to by happy omens, while the hooting of an owl was regarded as inauspicious. Wild beasts, the howling of wolves or foxes were feared as evil portents. Events or images in dreams were also used for divination. The Tibetan historical records tell of Khri-Srong-lDe-bTsan: "When he was twenty years old, his hands turned numb and he had an evil dream."① Another example is that of sTon-Pa-gShen-Rab, the founding father of

① Helmut Hoffmann, The Religions of Tibet, Chinese traslation by Li youyi, Published by Institute for Nationalities of China Social Science, 1967.

Bon. Just prior to his death, one of his best disciples, sitting in meditation in the wilderness, dreamt he saw the character "A (first letter of Tibetan thirty basic letter) " written in white, which then suddenly disappeared. ①

"Mo", the Tibetan word for "divination, " is a feminine gender term while the verbs denoting the act of divination, "Mo-bTab" and "Mo-Sho" are synonymous respectively with "the sowing woman" and "female does [for divining] . " The sources of such phenomena are worth tracing. According to some Bon koradjis from the Kham area (where Tibet adjoins the present-day provinces of Sichuan and Yunnan), most of the first diviners were women, and this was how all the diviners of later days came to be called "Mo-Ma" (female witches). I think this explanation is reasonable. Materials from different sources show that females dominated the Bon religion both in numbers and status. In many Bon texts, the first of the deities to be addressed in worship was Yum-chen, meaning the Great Mother (or Grand Mother); then came tre-ae-sng, also a female deity; both ranked second only to the highest fundamental gods, who were all females, as verified by the Yon-Tan-rGya-mTsho: "The Dhama of the Bon religion is preceded by 360 females maras."② Such a high status for female deities shows the respect females enjoyed in the Bon religion, and so it is not surprising that the majority of witch-diviners were women. This to a certain extent indicates the one-time existence of matriarchal society in Tibetan history, when the clan or tribe's female leader, also served concurrently as its witch.

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① Helmut Hoffmann: "The Religions of Tiebet", Chinese traslation by Li youyi, Published by Institute for Nationalities of China Social Science, 1967.

② The Eminent Monk Yon-Tan-rGya-mTsho of dPal-sPung, Pis-med Chos-kyi-'Byung-gNas-Mdo-tSam, Chinese traslation by Liu Liqian. , Kham Zang Yanjiu Yuekan, Kham and Tibetan Studies Monthly, vol. 26, 1949.

Category 2) The vPhrul gShen

The koradjis in this category were engaged in "following and developing the 360 methods of inference to influence destiny."[①] In other words, they used primitive koradjis craft and curses to control the elements and harm their enemies, thereby effecting the results prescribed.

It is recorded in a number of materials that when the Bon founding master sTon-Pa-gShes-Rab first went into areas where the Han nationality lived, it was by virtue of his incantations that he was able to defeat the evil spirits there so that the Bon religion spread with little resistance.

In this category we will turn our attention to the A, Mye as a representative. After the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet, most of the A, Mye were converted and became Red Hat lamas, yet nevertheless, continued to practice the witchcraft characteristics of the Bon religion. As such they can be found almost everywhere in the rural farming districts of Tibet. A Bon lama once told me that the title A, mye was used to refer specifically to witches with certain magical powers. Bon consisted of three groupings: A-Bon, Mi-Bon, and Lha-Bon. A bon were deities of the highest realm, corresponding to the Bon-sKu, Mi-Bon were the embodiments of deities who had descended from heaven to the world of man; corresponding to sPrul-sKu, they were similar to the living Buddhas of Buddhism. A Bon whose status was somewhat lower than that of Lha-Bon and Mi-Bon, were witches of the religion. A, Mye was a kind of a Bon, which constituted a sect in the early Bon religion. During the early years of the Tang dynasty, i. e. before the time of Khri-srong-lDe-btsan, the sect was quite

① The Eminent Monk Yon-Tan-rGya-mTsho of dPal-sPung, Pis-med Chos-kyi-'Byung-gNas-Mdo-tSam, Chinese traslation by Liu Liqian., Kham Zang Yanjiu Yuekan, Kham and Tibetan Studies Monthly, vol. 26, 1949.

powerful in Tibet. Its function then was, in the main, to preside over sacrificial rituals. Therefore at that time, mye simply indicated the sacrificial masters of Bon. After the time of Khri-Srong-lDe-bTsan, owing to the persecution Bon suffered in Tibet, and especially to the discontinuity of all Bon activities except those "which were of benefit to all living creatures, such as divination, praying for happiness and avoidance of disasters and misfortune which were mostly preserved, "① the majority of sacrificial masters, i. e. A, Mye, changed their occupation. From that time on, their major social role was hail-prevention and astrological divination. Of these two religious activities the former was the most important and the A, Mye came to be known as "the hail-prevention lamas."

Hail had always been one of the worst natural disasters in the regions populated by the Tibetan people. "Every other day the land was visited by strong wind, heavy rain, thunderstorms or hail." (*Tong Dian*) When there were hailstorms, little would remain of the crops. Consequently there was a hail-prevention what they called A, Mye for almost every two or three villages in the rural areas. For example, there were five of them in the Reng-pa-tshar District of the cKar-mDzes County, where I came from. The A, mye were provided for by the peasants' toil, in the hope that they would thus be protected against natural calamities and their crops would be safeguarded. Were these measures of any avail?

Their magical practices were based on the explanation of the origin of hail contained in the ancient myths of the Tibetan people. Hail, the A, Mye explain, is the result of the deliberate actions of the mountain gods and goddesses who, like human beings, have their own

① Wang Zhong, *Xin Tanshu Tubo Zhuan Qianzheng* (Brief discuss on History of the Tubo Regime in the New Book of Tang), Science Publishing Company, 1958.

land, villages and pastures in the mountains. However, while the gods and goddesses excel at hunting, they were never capable of farming and have to obtain their daily grain by robbing the peasants. A successful hailstorm ensures a bumper harvest for the mountain gods. Therefore, when autumn sets in and the crops are ready for harvest, they roam the land with their caravans of beasts loaded with hailstones. Whenever the peasants are caught off guard, they unloaded their hailstones and return to their mountain abode with the beasts now laden with grain. The clouds which appear before storms in the mountains, say the A, mye, are formed from the dust raised by these beasts, preceded by the goddess Pha-ri-lha, leading in her hand a tiger.

It was the task of the hail-prevention lamas to scare and scatter the beasts or, as a last resort when the situation became desperate, to kill them.

How then did the A, Mye actually determine that there was going to be a hailstorm? While they possessed no modern scientific knowledge regarding the formation of hail, their methods of meteorological observation, based on living experience, were scientific in their own way. There is a Tibetan saying which aptly describes them: "Downstairs the dog watches the door, upstairs the A, Mye watches the skies." A, mye were very familiar with popular experience recorded in proverbs dealing with observation of the weather and its forecasting. A few of the more representative proverbs follow. Regarding weather forecasting in observation of the clouds, there is the following example:

A, regarding the forecasting of weather through observation of the clouds, there is the following two exmple:

When on rising you cannot make out the lines on your hand, hurry upstairs and observe the eastern sky. With white clouds rolling

like beasts in a band, hail will surely come in the afternoon.

When the clouds are in strips, like lances, rain there will be, but not hail, so go back to sleep; But if the clouds stand poplar-like on mountain tops, get out your bone horn and blow for all you are worth.

B, Regarding the forecasting of weather through observation of the temperature, there is the following example:

A hailstorm is brewing when the sun is not fierce yet the soil is warm.

C, Animal behavior was also observed, there is the following two example:

Flocks of crows flying about, crowing, show that a hailstorm is likely coming.

When larks fly high, singing slowly, it will be bright-no clouds, no hail.

In accordance with such age-old proverbs, which were passed down from generation to generation, the A, mye were able to foresee when a hailstorm was coming. They would then immediately summon the villagers to prepare to fight the storm by shouting and firing guns. The shouts of "pha-ri-sha ho ho" were designed to shame the goddess leading the caravan, while the gunfire was designed to scare and scatter the beasts carrying the hailstones. The latter course of action is still followed today, When both these methods failed to achieve results, the A, mye then had to evoke his magical powers.

The first step an A, Mye would take is to call, with incantations, for the Bon deities and local guardian angels. These deities and angels were mostly three-headed and six-armed, and heads were usually those of the lion, the horse, the tiger, the bear etc. Deserving of our attention is the fact that these were mostly female and they were

refereed to by the general term Khro-Mo (angry mothers). For example, we can cite the example of the "lion-faced mother", whose leonine head and woman's body were black and general appearance was monstrous. Originally of the Bon religion, she had been tamed by Padamasambhava and had become a guardian angel of Lamaism. Another similar figure was rTa-mGrin, whose existence continues today in Lamaism. Colored red from head to toe, he wore human skin as his upper garment while his lower torso was covered with tiger skin. He had three horse heads, which explains the origin of his name, mgrin being "horse" in Tibetan. He carried a dagger in his right hand and a bowl of bloody water in his left. Another of the deities and angel was the rDo-rJe-Phag-Mo, the boar-headed vajra, who carried female genitals against his breast. These later two furies, formed by nature to be a pair, were accepted into Lamaism as Bon deities because of the help they rendered to Padmasambhava in vanquishing rLu-Tra, a monster of extraordinary magic powers. Details of the encounter were included in *Biography of the Founding Master Padmasambhava*. rTa-mGrin, the story goes, entered the monster through its mouth, while the "boar-headed" monster entered his stomach via the anus. The two, horse and boar began to roar and expand on the monster's stomach, so that the monster, finding the pain unbearable, surrendered. Because of such meritorious service, the two beasts were allowed into the Dhamadhatu of Buddhism. Apparently the story is part of the excessive praise heaped by the lamas on Padmasambhava and reflects, in fact, the introduction of Bon deities into Lamaism.

Besides the Bon deities, the most effective of the A, mye's guardian angels was said to be the Dpal-lDan-Lha-Mo. This was a female belonging to the category of Mo-Ma of ancient Bon. Many said that the image she presented when her passion was fully aroused was none other than that of the Mo-Ma female demons. Myths about her

were very popular among the Tibetan people, who regarded her as a universal deity of the world. Some other minority peoples such as Naxi nationality in Yunnan, also were her great devotees.

Dpal-Lden-Lha-mo was said to have lived in the moral world among the Tibetans in the earliest times. Later she married, successively, into the Upper Realm of God, the Middle Realm of the Demon, and the Lower Realm of the Dragon, and because of her extraordinary powers, she was welcomed everywhere she went. The lion head dangling from her right ear and the peacock feather decorating her hair were awards bestowed on her by the realm of the Gods, and the snakes earring worn on her left ear was an award from the realm of the Dragon. Having fought her way through the three realms of heaven, earth and the sea, her will was as strong as steel and the title was conferred in her of Mistress of mKha'-sPyod-dBang-Mo Dpal-ldan-lha-mo, i. e. Heavenly Females of Bravery.

Sacrifices offered to her by the A, Mye differed from those offered by the lamas in that they consisted of human blood and flesh, which were taboo in Buddhism. It was stated in definite terms in the A, mye texts for worship and prayer that she was the "human flesh eating, human blood drinking Mistress of mKha'-spyod-dbang-mao Dpal-ldan lha-mo." So while nominally the A, mye had been converted to rNying-Ma-Pa and became lamas, they nevertheless persisted in the rituals of ancient Bon when carrying out their religious activities. This was bemoaned by the Byang-Chub-'od: "You koradjis in the countrysides! Such practice of yours are truly shocking. If other people become known it elsewhere. These deeds, which you talk about in the name of Buddhism, are in fact more cruel than the doings

of the Raksasa."[①] The A, mye contradicted Buddhist discipline in various ways. For example, while Buddhism strictly forbids the taking of life, the A, mye included killing in their magic for resisting hailstorms.

When a hailstorm was actually descending, an A, Mye would resort to a second course of action. Putting on his black robe for incantation and a black hat decorated with human skulls, he would ascend to the roof of the house and commence his magic, which initially was designed to be as moderate as possible. Dancing, waving his arms about, and blowing his trumpet into the approaching storm, he copied the gestures of the Bon deities and guardian angels in order to divert the storm to another place. It was considered that it was most ideal to deal with the storm in a moderate fashion. Then he would blow his ox horn, called the cursing horn in Tibetan. On three sides of the horn a dragon was carved. These three dragons would fly into the sky when the horn was blown and they would roar and cause lightening and thunder in order to frighten and disperse the caravan of animals carrying the hailstones of the mountain gods. Such a course of action was still considered to be moderate and polite, but if this should fail then the A, mye would set out to kill with his magic. He would fill his horn with white mustard seeds, which he had cured with curses beforehand, and commence to blow. The seeds were said to be as lethal as bullets or grenades, capable of annihilating an entire caravan. At the same time, he would draw out his "heaven-piercing sword" and join in the murderous fray. When this course of action also failed to be effective, it was established that the Bon deities and the guardian angels had not come to assist the A, mye who was entitled to

① *Xizang zhong shiji shi*, translated into Chinese by Li Youyi and Deng Ruiling from Giuseppe Tucci, *History of Tibet in the Middle Ages*, mimeograph by Institute for Nationalities of China Social Science, 1965.

be angry with them, He would declare war on them with another incantation, a gesture which ordinary lamas never attempted to try.

From these rituals of the A, mye, one glimpses vivid images of the essence of the witchcraft of the old religion of Bon, an essence which embodies the attitudes of the ancient Tibetan people in their attempt to bring under control the forces of nature. The performances of the A, mye provided a rich spiritual profile of the Tibetan people which cannot be found in any of the Buddhist scriptures.

Along with the development of the natural sciences in Tibet after liberation, the true causes of the hailstorms became known to the Tibetans who, together with their Han brothers, have developed a rocket locally which is useful for fighting hailstorms, so that the A, mye are no longer needed for this task. For more than a decade now, no A, mye has been invited to perform their hail-fighting magic in my home district. However, we have to recognize that they continue to have social functions in other fields-astrological divination, incantatory spells etc. -even today. Eight or nine out of every ten A, Mye are well versed in spells, an art much respected by the Tibetan populace. I was told that the earliest cursing incantations of the A, mye were used in war, their participation in which was regarded as indispensable since their curses against foes were regarded as being very effective.

Spells were cast in two ways: The first was oral while the second, termed "cursing with Gtor-ma" required a number of accessories: an ox horn, multicoloured thread, a sword, an iron chain, an iron triangular framework, a hooked axe (any of these items could be replaced by a wooden replica) and, above all, tsamba (made of qingke barley flour) figurines symbolic of the ones to be harmed by the spell. Specific texts for placing the spells were then prepared, each corresponding to the manner of death, -e. g., live burning, live burial, drowning etc., -assigned to the victims. Generally speaking

there were four types of associated rituals:

(1) The symbolic enemy was locked inside a triangular iron framework (symbolic of an iron prison cell), and then, after it was buried in the direction of the enemy, a crowd of people would stamp on the ground above. This "trampling by a thousand" was designed to make it impossible for the victim to be resurrected.

(2) The figurines could be buried at the crossroads.

(3) The pointed gTor-Ma could be hurled in the direction of the enemy camp.

(4) The figurines could be placed before the A, mye who would then disembowel and quarter them with his sword while chanting his incantations.

Besides these elaborate spells, there were much simpler curses: shouting and yelling at the hailstorm to go away, sprinkling water while begging for rain, spitting in front of people on occasion brought them bad luck, and women displaying their genitals to curse the enemy etc. These simple forms of cursing are, according to many old and experienced witches, also the earliest forms. When the New *Book of the Tang* (Xin Tang Shu Tubo Zhuan) said that the Tubo (i. e. Tibetans) "practiced cursing," it most probably referred to this custom. This shows that these simple ways of cursing were known to all. It was only later when they felt that their curses had little or rather limited effects that they started to develop more effective ways of cursing. In order to be effective, these had to be complex and therefore this became the tasks of professionals. The A, mye were the master cursers when the art of cursing had developed to very high level.

Categoty 3) The vDur-gShen

Also known as the Srid-gShen, the task of these witches,

according to Yon-Tan-rGya-mTsho was"to subjugate and eliminate all fiends and the unclean in heaven, earth and the world of man and was to summon ghosts and to bring peace and safety to the living. These were the srid gshen yana." The Bon witches performing such magic must, according to the Thu'u-bKwan-Blo-bZang-Chos-Kyi-Nyi-Ma'i-Grub-mTha'-Thams-Cad-Shel-Gyi-Me-Long, know and be able to apply the 360 means of death, the four methods of driving away ghosts, and the 81 skills for suppressing evil spirits. From these documents one can see that the social functions of witches of the vdur gshen category were to deal with beings from another world. In practice, they employed their magic to command ghosts and gods, subjugate monsters and demons, provided safe passage for the souls of the dead on their way to the other world, summon the dead back to life, etc. Their functions resembled what shamanism described as "the heavenly ascent of the soul." Tibetan historical records show that three Bon witches were invited respectively from Kashmir, Bo-lu and Yang-tong to attend to the funeral of Gri-Gum-bTsan-Po. One of them was capable of "making people serve him against their will and subjugating fiends."① He fell into this category of witches.

Many records tell how the founding master of Bon, sTon-Pa-gShen-Rab, like the founder of Lamaism, Padamasambhava, traveled from place to place conquering demons and suppressing monsters, thus opening up the way for development of Bon. It was said of him that he could open up the gate of the gods for the living, bar the entrance to hell for the dead, and lead all living creatures onto the religious path. He went to the western part of Shang-Shung, the southern part of Kong-Po, and the eastern part of Ba-ri, conquering a

① "Thu-kvan-Blo-bZang-Chos-Kyi-Nyi-Ma'i Grub-mTha'Thams-Cad-Shel-Gyi-Me-Long", Chinese traslation by Liu Liqian, Tibet People Publishing Company, 1985.

great number of ghosts and spirits. When monsters in the Kong-Po area tried to block his way with a black magic mountain, these narratives show that great importance was attached to such religious actives as commanding spirits and conquering demons and fiends.

Of the many magic arts practiced by the vDur-gShen witches, one was termed bCad. This is only of the more popular forms of magic prevailing in Tibet today for suppressing beings from the other world. While such an art is also practiced by lamas of different sects, it is the lamas of the Bon and of rNying-Ma-Pa who are most familiar with it. Most of the Bon lamas are bCad-Pa who practise bCad.

The very essence of this art lies in the self-sacrifice of the witch. Throughout the whole process of the application of the magic the witch appears to be in a state of unconsciousness while meeting with and offering his bones, flesh and blood to spirits, ghosts and fiends. Obviously these supernatural beings existed only in the witch's imagination. To perform such rituals for dislodging the spirits, the witch needed a rattle-drum, a piece of human fibula, a bell and a sword that had not been used to kill a person. The first three items were needed for the noise they emitted which would scare away spirits, while the last item was intended to kill any demon who refused to yield merely to noise. The magician also required a mask made of black silk, called rigr ang, the function of which was to prevent the sight of the horrifying images of demons and fiends while the magic was being performed. All the witches I know told me that they felt as though they were in a dream-like trance while performing the art. They were capable of seeing the images of ghosts and devils, who all possessed the shapes of man, and were of both sexes; the only difference was their extreme ugliness. Seen from this perspective, witches of this category were quite similar to the Dur-bon who also claimed to be able to see ghosts and spirits in various places and

which were capable of bringing luck or misfortune to man.

The bCad rituals are quite complex. Barley flour images of fiends and ministers are fashioned and laid in front of the witch, who, while droning his incantations, jumps about and wields his sword in a "devil's dance," mimicking the frenzied movements of the devil. In conclusion, he carves out the figure's heart and quarters it, then throwing the mutilated body into a triangular shaped burning wooden pile, then the magic arts was finished; Some time sculpt two ghosts with wood, one male and one female, placing them inside an ox hide bag, and then also burning them in a brazier. Whichever ritual is performed, it is carried out by the traditional rites of Bon.

Another witchcraft, in which the Bon lamas are well-versed, is vPho Ba (emigration), the function of which is to release the souls of the dead from purgatory.

VPho Ba obviously has much to do with the outlook on death of the ancient Tibetans. As to why there was no understanding of why man would die and where he went after death, the idea developed that with death the soul would separate from the body and continue to exist by itself.

According to Bon witches long in the profession, the first step to master vPho ba was to learn to master one's own soul. According to this work Thu ' u-bKwan-Blo-bZang-Chos-Kyi-Nyi-Mas-Grub-mTha'-Thems-Cad Shel-sKi-Me-Long, Bon teaches that one who cultivated this art must first learn to bring his soul under complete control, so that it will be able to stay when requested to reside, to go away when released, and to return when recalled. The process of cultivation must be under the supervision and guidance of a master.

The most important step in practicing vhpo ba, and also in learning it, is to open up the top of one's own head so that a slit appears which is large enough to insert a straw, a feat which witches

of this highest rank were said to be able to accomplish themselves. The orifice was intended to be the exit through which the soul could "emigrate". When starting to perform this magic, the witch must first of all have the word "Hram", which signifies his soul, appear in his heart. Gleaming brightly, it will dwell persistently in the heart, later would ascend to the crown of the head through the various blood vessels in the body. When this was achieved, half the process had been completed. The witch would then close his eyes tightly and summon up his physical strength for the opportune moment to arrive. He would then yell "Pei" with all his force. With the shout of the word "Hram," remaining at that point just below the crown, would rush suddenly out of the head through the aperture and collide with the crown of the dead. If the performance was successful, then a lock of hair would be found to have dropped from the body's head, who would then have what was called "the vHpo ba face" in Tibetan and his soul would then be pronounced to be saved since it would then be permitted to enter the realm of kusala. To conclude the ritual, the witch would then utter the shout "ah" to show that he had collected his own soul back to his heart.

To cultivate oneself in vpho ba, it was said, was to cultivate one's ability to control the heart and soul. According to the tenets of Bon, this signifies the attainment of purity and selflessness. Bon, the scripture Klu-zBum-dKor-Po explains, is to search for absolute purity and to not be moved by desire or emotion. This is reminiscent of Taoism of the Han people.

However, more often than not what Bon witches attempted to attain through the practice of vHpo ba was longevity, not the illusory purity of soul. The fact helps to show that the major social function of the Bon religion was to solve practical problems in daily life, which differed from the evasive illusions propagated by the Gelupa sect (the

yellow hat Tibetan Buddhism) Buddhism of later days.

Categiory 4) The sNang-gShen

These witches, explained the eminent monk Yon-Tan-rGya-mTsho in his Pis-Med-Chos-kyi-'Byung-gNas-mDo-tsam, were engaged in "learning the 360 ways to avert misfortune and gain happiness with prayer, to serve the gods, to banish bad luck and usher in auspiciousness and peace." According to Blo-Bzang-Chos-kyi-Nyi-Ma, sNang-gShen referred to the four eulogies, the eight prayers, and forty two ways of giving thanks to the gods. [1] In a nutshell, their function was "to pray for happiness and to avoid misfortune,"

Witches of this category served mainly in presiding over rites of worship in the early days of Bon, and had certain statues in the government. As an example, let us quote the dBon-Lha witches of the Ser Thar Grassland.

Ser Thar Grassland is situated at the source of the Dadu River and on the foothills of the Bayankela Mountains. The Tibetan tribe of Wa-shu, who have lived there since ancient times, were said to be descendants of border garrison troops of the Tubo regime. From the days when the first nomads groups established itself there, it was said, they riled through two systems of government, one secular, with the Gerat Headman as the leader, another theocratic, whose officials were always known as dPon-Lha. The latter were responsible for civil administration and religious affairs. The structure was said to have been inherited from the military structure of the Tufan regime, which has, for every thousand households, a senior Bon witch called lha-

[1] "Thu'u-bKwan-Blo-bZang-Chos-Kyi-Nyi-Ma'i-Grub-mTha Thams-Cad-Shel-Gyi-Me-Long", Chinese traslation by Liu Liqian, Tiber People Publishing Company, 1985.

dpon-po and a junior Bon witch called Lha-Pa for each combat group. Both were responsible for offering prayers, but there was a division of labour between them: the former presided over all sorts of rites of worship on important occasions, while the latter simply prayed for help in vanquishing the enemy when the occasion arose. Later, when tribal alliance emerged, each of these had one hereditary Lha-dPon to preside over the rites of worship, while each of the tribes under it has one lha pa. The pattern was maintained in the tribe of Wa-shul until before 1950. Hereditary in their status, both the Lha-dPon and Lha-Pa did not wear the patched robes of the Buddhist monk or live in a lamasery. Rather, they lived and acted in the same way any of their neighbors would and there was nothing to distinguish them as hereditary witches of the Bon religion. Only when war or other important occasions arose, they would then step out to perform their duties. The gods they served were chiefly mountain gods. The dpon kha claimed themselves to be descendants of the god-mountain of vBrong-ri, which the local herdsmen supported explicitly, declaring that this was why the Wa-shul dPon-Lha's complexion was purplish, since that was also the color of the holy mountain.

Religious activities of the lha dpon were centered on praying to the god-mountain for the safety of the tribes and the flourishing of the herds, and thus were directly relevant to the livelihood and production of the herdsmen. The lha-dpon also presided over the annual rites of saluting the gods before the mountain. In earlier times this called for sacrificing large numbers of oxen and sheep. Later, with the introduction and spread of Buddhism, such offerings were replaced by smoke sent up at the foot of the mountain. On the day of the ceremony members of all the tribes gathered there, paying calls on each other and providing entertainment, feasting and celebrating, as on any festival. This was intended to renew and reaffirm the alliance as well

as to celebrate the harvests. By so doing, they followed ancient traditions for dispelling suspicion and eliminating discord which had arisen during the year, in order to consolidate their alliance and unity.

The Lha-dPon also took part in nomads groups warfare. It was reported that a long time ago, a war broke out between the Wa-Shul groups and the Black Water groups living in Aba. In order to subjugate the enemy, the Wa-shul dPon-Lha led his people to build a white tower for ritual performances. Henceforth, the Black Water tribe never harassed them again. Another myth foes that once when a headman of Nyag-Rong initiated a feud with the tribe, the Wa-shul dPon-Lha immediately invoked the divine infantry and cavalry from the Rbrong-ri god-mountain to help and put him to rout. Each time before the tribesman went on raids against other tribes rites were held to pray to the holy mountain to confer courage and strength on the warriors, and to protect them in combat. These rituals were also presided over by the dPon-Lha. All these showed the important role the dPon-Lha undertook in military affairs.

In contrast, the Lha-Pa in pre-1950 days served mostly among the tribes as mediums between the gods and man, often relaying what the gods had said. When the lha pa did so, complex rituals were held. Firstly, he would enter a state of unconsciousness with the help of various drugs to show that his soul had separated from his body and gone to heaven to invite various gods hostile to the tribe to descend among the herdsmen. To achieve the effect, almost every lha pa sought the help of liquor, the traditional usage of which in ancient Tibetan religions has never been established in many records. It was said, for example, that during master Tsong-Kha-Pa's pilgrimage to the Ri God Mountain, the god-mountain was displeased because of his abstention from liquor dictated by the Buddhist religion and caused his

feet, when he was crossing the Sgrou-ma Mountain Range, to be pricked by the thorny undergrowth. The wounds immediately became inflamed and swollen, dripping blood and oozing pus. Crippled by the pain, he was unable to continue the journey. This tale sheds much light on the indispensability of liquor for the ancient religion. Besides liquor, the Lha-Pa also used, from time to time, the smoke from cypress timber as a kind of drug. Once under the effect of these narcotics, the lha pa would enter a state of derangement; his limbs would become rigid, his eyes would stare, and he would begin to dance in a frenzied manner said to be patterned to the altar. Then he would fall silent, his eyes glazed, while the saliva would froth around his mouth. The silence would last for quite a while. Then all of a sudden it would be broken by a piercing shriek from the witch announcing that all the guardian angels of the tribe had entered him, and that from then on what he spoke would be the words of the spirits. Such performances of the Lha Pa witches are very similar to those of shamans as described by scholars.

The Lha Pa differed from the lamas in that they mostly supported themselves through their own labor and mixed with the tribesmen in their production and collective activities. Easy to approach, they were welcomed by the populace and possessed certain prestige.

In the pastoral area of Khampa there was a kind of monk who was said to be able to resurrect the dead. Although a very small minority in terms of number, wondrous tales of them spread far and wide. Each of these persons, who were both witches and monks with eminent status, kept a ledger in which entries were made of the dead in their district of operation, together with the dates of the deaths and other details of the deceased. These ledgers were their hereditary treasure. These monks claimed the ability to transmit oral messages from the departed, which they practiced as their social function. Under the

influence of their faith in the return from the underworld of their decreased relatives, the Tibetan people wanted very much to find out how their decreased kin fared in hell and to establish communication with them. These monks, it was universally claimed, were the only ones capable of this task.

The monks were said to visit hell once a year. Before they set out, announcements were made for those living around and wanting their services to come and register. The rituals of the monk's visit to hell were carried out in a white tent which was closed and sealed up from the outside. When he commenced his journey, he could be heard calling out the names of the gods, begging them to enter his body. During this worship, the monk must concentrate to invoke the image of a goddess or other god to emerge in his mind, offering her or him sacrifices including blood considered to be the most filthy of its kind, i. e. that of a leper, a widow, a killer, a murder victim etc., which were strictly taboo in Buddhism. The practice warrants special attention. "If a person offered faeces, urine, semen, blood etc. etc. to gods who are pure and clean," said Byang-Chub-'od, a lama of the Sakya sect, "he would be sent to the bottom of the deepest hell,"① If this serves to establish the relevance of such offerings to go to hell, then the practice is rational because the monk's destination was hell. There were of course other offerings apart from blood. Using these offerings, the monk would bargain with his Bon deities and other guardian angels in order to equip himself with as much divine power as possible and to deal with all situations that might arise in hell. After these rituals, the monk would shut himself up for seven days in the tent. These were the days during which the monk supposedly

① *Xizang Zhong Shiji Shi*, translated into Chinese by Li Youyi and Deng Ruiling from Giuseppe Tucci, *History of Tibet in the Middle Ages*, mimeograph by Institute for Nationalities of China Social Science, 1965.

journeyed to the underworld and at this time no one was allowed to enter the tent. Therefore nobody knew what actually happened there. After seven days had passed and the tent was opened up, people could see the monk lying on the bed breathing with effort, like a traveler utterly fatigued after an arduous journey. His shoulders and back were covered with wounds that appeared to have been inflicted by the claws of a cat, but which were said to have been the work of the suffering ones in the underworld who inflicted the wounds to remind him to relay their messages to the world of the living. The messages said by the monk to have been brought back from hell were contained in a volume which had been prepared beforehand. I have one of these books and, although the title of this work is missing, the text reveals a great deal. Besides listing more than three hundred modes of death, it provides the specific causes, times and places of each death entered, as well as the deceased's hopes and expectations for the family, relatives and friends he has left behind. From those descriptions one can see that most deaths were attributed to the early gods of the Bon religion, such as bTsan, gNyan Sa bdy, bDud and gDon vdre. The descriptions, according to the believers of Bon, fundamentally paralleled three hundred and sixty modes of death named in their religion. Thus some form of association exists between the two.

Conclusion

1. From the witchcraft and the social functions of the four categories of Bon witches one can see that, judging by its contents, Bon was a primitive religion, one that maintained that all things possessed spirits. The objects of worship included the sky, earth, sun, moon, stars, thunder, lighting, hailstorms, mountains and streams, and even soil, rock, plants and animals. Bon was obviously

the specific form of what anthropologists term animistic shamanism, a crude prototypical religious consciousness which arose among the Tibetan people at the historical stage when their productive forces were low and they were subject to the forces of nature. The Bon witches were the embodiment of this religious consciousness. Their activities, which involved flattering, pleasing and driving out the gods, were designed to resist natural calamities. Thus their emergence and social roles were relevant to the practical welfare of the Tibetan people. The witch's activities not only gave expression to, but also furthered the development of, this primitive religious consciousness. After the introduction of Buddhism from India, the Bon witches were forced to accept the new faith and become lamas. Despite the conversion, Bon consciousness and witchcraft remained. They continue to have a universal existence among the Tibetan population. And, while in the majority of cases they have been assimilated by Lamaism and accepted by Buddhism, they permeate every aspects of the Tibetan people's psychology.

2. Many complex and differing sets of rituals were found in the various witchcraft activities of the practitioners, such as gTor-Ma, burning, cursing, bCad, and the various forms of divination, incantation and prayer. Witches of different categories placed particular stress on particular rituals, which demonstrates that Bon, as a specific form of animistic shamanism, different categories of witches. This was one of the major differences between Bon and Buddhism, when the latter was introduced into Tibet.

3. Another feature differentiating Bon from Buddhism was that, in offering sacrifices to the gods, Bon witches always slaughtered animals. Alliances were always pledged—as on many occasions between the Tang dynasty and the Tubo—with the sacrifice of sheep, dogs and monkeys, as is recorded in the Book of Tang. On

particularly solemn occasions, such as the triennial worship of heaven and earth, horses, oxen, donkeys, and sometimes even human beings, were killed and offered up. These practices were in direct contradiction with Buddhism and were forbidden when that religion continue in Lamaism. But these life offerings replaced by other abiological offerings, such as timber or barley flour figurines. This shows the deep roots of indigenous faith in Tibet.

4. The fact that Bon witch converted into lamas, e. g. the Bon witch A, Mye turning into the hailstorm-prevention lama, shows how the ancient and primitive religion of Tibet was integrated with Buddhism. This process of conflict-integration between the two religions commenced with the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet during the Tang dynasty. Buddhism triumphed and has subsequently controlled social, economic and other aspects of Tibetan life, deciding the fate of Tibet for more than a millennium. Bon was the loser in this conflict, actually Bon not only reflecting and maintaining the indigenous Tibetan way of life, But also continues to permeate the material and spiritual life of Tibetan society. Even though the Bon witches changed their religion, their social roles continue in many aspects of life. The two religions, Bon and Buddhism, as the two forces that have come to form the culture and religion of modern Tibet, constitute extremely important aspects of Tibetan history and religion.

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PART 2

Social and Economic Changes in TAR and Other Tibetan Areas

Three Stages of Development of Tibetan Families and Modernization of Tibet

Part I

The "One Hundred Households Survey in Tibet" was a key research project of the China Tibetology Research Center in 1995. This project was orchestrated by the Institute for Social Economy of the Center. Besides eleven experts from the Institute for Social Economy, the Research Division, the Library and the Institute for History and Religion of the Center, four other middle-aged or young scholars participated in the survey, who were from the Anthropology Department, the Politics Department and the Administration Department from Sun Yat-Sen University and the Ethnic Institute of the China Academy of Social Sciences. This project, by a full-depth research into the cell of the society—family, is to give an objective, concrete and vivid description and reflection about the development of the Tibetan society over the past four decades.

Although this survey is titled "One Hundred Households Survey in Tibet", actually it surveyed 155 households, from which 140 valid questionnaires were reclaimed. We have taken great efforts to process the data manually as well as using computers, and based on which we finally give a detailed summary to the data. Owing to certain

limitations, this survey is unable to get affluent samples and in some survey sites the random sampling in real sense was unavailable, inevitably causing errors and bias. We have selected samples from urban, agricultural and pasturing areas, including 45 households in Lu Gu residential community of Lhasa, 10 households in the Shol Village, 44 households at Banjorlhunbo Village of Gyamrab Township in Gyantse County, 46 households at No. 5 Village at Yoicha Township of Amdo County, and 10 households at Daba Village of Wootong Township at Zogong County in Chamdo Prefecture. These three types of areas enable our samples to be more representative, reflecting overall profile of the development of economy of family and society in Tibet.

With uniformly designed questionnaires, uniformly designated survey time and uniformly selected subjects, the investigators set their feet on the urban, agricultural and pasturing areas carrying out their investigations. The survey began in May 1995 and ended up in November of that year. Contents of the questionnaire cater to the overall requirement and need of the project about the development of the hundred households over the past four decades, including 17 items as basic information of the families, family members, family relation, family organization structure, household income and dispense, family economic management, production materials of the family, consumer durable goods, life style, housing, laborers, off-duty activities, provide for the aged, child birth and child education, etc. These items center on social and economic changes that have occurred in the Tibetan families, being able to reflect current life and lifestyle of the grass roots Tibetan families as well as to compare politics, economy, society, culture, religion and population of Tibet before and after the Democratic Reform and the Reform and Opening. To facilitate the comparison, we classify the survey contents into four historical stages:

the first, before the Democratic Reform, namely, before 1959; the second, after the Democratic Reform, namely, from 1959 through 1966; the third, the People's Commune, namely, from 1966 through 1980; the fourth, from the Reform and Opening onward, namely from 1980 through 1994. This classification of stages will help us to compare the data and trace back changes in the Tibetan families over the past four decades.

On the basis of random cluster sampling as well as the background materials provided by the local governments (including some important archives), we give analysis to the data and facts to enhance reliability of the data and facts. For instance, some families consisting young couples did not know or could not remember financial status of the families before the 1950s. Under this circumstance, we had to look up the archives trying to help them to check or remember story in the past, owing to which, the reliability of the data can be ensured. During the survey, we realized that questionnaire was far from sufficient to understand the development of a family and interview was also important, so we collectively used the questionnaire and interview/observation method, with the latter being predominant. To ensure good quality of the survey, we had given a short-term training program to the investigators, requiring them to carry out door-to-door survey and interview and fill out the questionnaires face to face. The data were later reviewed and the background information was addressed in order to ensure correctness, owing to which, the investigators were able to collect the firsthand data and spot some questions unable to be reflected by the questionnaire.

Quantitative analysis is one of the important methods that are widely used by the social science community. We have tried our best to conduct this large-scale questionnaire survey in the urban, agricultural and pasturing areas in order to collect reliable firsthand

data, which will support our quantitative analysis on the rules of the development of families and society of Tibet and furthermore truly reflect the history and current status of the economy development of the family and society of Tibet over past four decades. However, our survey is a trailblazing one and we hope there will be more and more experts who will become interested in Tibetan family issues. Therefore, we provide some tabulated information about the individual families and list data collected from the questionnaires for coming researchers' reference. We hope more scholars will capitalize on the information and data that we have provided to contribute their articles and works, with purpose of promoting family harmony, stability, solidarity, prosperity and progress of Tibetan society.

This article is based on information and data collected from five residential locations in urban, agricultural and pasturing areas of Tibet, and is contributed by fifteen scholars who have spent several months writing it. Equipped with the information and data, and interview and observation results, and by referring to research results of peer anthropologists and tibetologists, this article gives a vivid description and in-depth probe to the past, current status and trend for the family-based economy and culture in Tibet at different research levels and from varied perspectives. All the contributors try to convey their views and opinions with genuine facts and data hoping their contribution will provide useful information for decision-making regarding social and economic development of Tibet. However even if we have reviewed this book for many times, some limitations may cause flaws to this article, such as lacking of adequate experience, gap among the different academic fields, limited capacity to manipulate the writing skills, and different observation angles. To present a naive face of the data and facts, we do not give a big alteration to them, hoping the readers to peruse and compare by

themselves.

In the past, some anthropologists, ethnologists and tibetologists both China and abroad had done some on-spot family-based social and economical surveys in Tibet. However, the surveys were too old and small-scaled, let alone using of sampling questionnaires. The 1995 "One Hundred Households Survey in Tibet", which was jointly sponsored by the Press Office of the State Council and the China Tibetology Research Center, is to date the biggest and widest survey over Tibetan society, being able to provide vivid and firsthand materials regarding history and current status of Tibet, in particular, development and modernation of grass-roots society of Tibet since the Democratic Reform and around the Reform and Opening.

Part II

The family issues are most concerned by the social science community, in particular after the United Nations set 1994 as the International Year of the Family. Many authoritative family research scholars hold that family is the basic organization unit and cell of the human being society, playing a vital role in social development so far. World peace and social stability and progress predominantly depend on the harmony of family. In Tibet, millions of families are small units for supporting life and production of the Tibetan society, and most Tibetan people survive and work in families. Therefore family life is a very important aspect in Tibetan society, interrelating personal emotion, ethnic sympathy and economic interest. In a sense, stability and progress of family safeguard stability and progress of Tibetan society.

Second, the Tibetan people center on the family carrying out their daily life, including marriage, birth, breeding, education,

maturity, provide for the aged and hospice. Tibet is a macroscopic society that is based on the families and the families are microscopic ambience that the Tibetan people survive. For several thousand years, the Tibetan people live and work in their families, and therefore, history of Tibetan family can reflect the development of Tibetan society. Thus we try to learn the development of Tibetan society over the past four decades after liberation of Tibet from probing into the Tibetan families.

The Tibetan families develop with social development, and are affected by political and ideological changes and social changes that have occurred in China in the past five decades, particularly, the 1959 Democratic Reform and the Reform and Opening started from the end of 1978. There are so many great changes that have dramatically affected the Tibetan society, which are difficult to be fully covered by this article. We will feed our readers some data and facts and statistic results that we have collected during this survey in the following.

1. Our survey results show that the biggest political event that Tibetan people know is the Democratic Reform. The Tibetan people remember it clearly and are very satisfied with it, because:

1.1 The traditional Tibetan society before the Democratic Reform was a juvenile feudalism society dominated by a caesaropapism government-feudalism serf system. Under this system the serfs were allocated a lot by the lairds at the expense of losing freedom. Land and most cattle belonged to the monks, the nobles and the local governments, who accounted for merely 5% of the total population. The serfs were deprived of land and had to sustain heavy unpaid corvee, and high taxes in money or material form. The serfs led a life in dramatic hardship although they worked hard. Knowing the impossibility to change their fate and all fruits would be seized by the lairds, the serfs lost any ambition to increase output or improve

production facilities. During our survey, the interviewees, either the house serfs called Nangsan living in Banjorlhunbo Village of Gyantse County, or the former beggars living in Lugu Bamcang, held that before the Democratic Reform the Tibetan society was a cruel society that few nobles enjoyed luxuries and the majority of the Tibetan population lived in hardship. The Democratic Reform during the 1959-1961 for the first time demolished the feudal serf system, allocating land and cattle to the serfs that had been set free. The millions of ex-serfs were anxious to develop economy when they were granted land and agricultural output in Tibet boomed and number of cattle doubled after the Reform. Therefore the Tibetan people think highly of the Democratic Reform and will never forget it.

1.2 The Democratic Reform helped the serfs to shrug off the personal attachment to the three kinds of serf-owners, becoming citizens of the new society and enjoying freedom and rights and interests that the constitution and laws regulate, and having obtained opportunity to directly participate in and manage the political and economic activities. The Tibetan people have been given touchable fruits by the Democratic Reform, particularly, those who originally lived in the most inferior class, including Nangsan, Duchung, beggars, blacksmith, and slaughters, who had nothing in the old society. After the Democratic Reform, the former serfs were set free, and were allocated land, cattle and houses, beginning to enjoy citizenship equal to their former owners. At the end of October 1960, the entire Tibet had completed the land reform, having confiscated or redeemed arable land 2.8 million Ke (one Ke equals to one Mu) that were formerly occupied by the serf owners, and allocated the land to about 800 thousand serfs/slaves belonging to 200 thousand households. In addition, 20 thousand slaves living in agricultural-

pasturing areas were set free. ① Owing thanks to freedom and land that the Democratic Reform have brought about to them, the Tibetan people older than 40 think highly of it, feeling very satisfied with it.

1.3 In the old Tibetan society, the families were fixed onto the land, and structure and function of the families were heavily affected by the land system. In order to prevent the family land and property from separating as well as to keep their noble social class, the noble families tried their best to keep their families closely tied, even at the expanse of several brothers marrying one wife. Whilst, the poor serf families usually had no production materials, let alone property maintenance. Although the poor serf families had no property, they had to sustain the corvee, which was allocated according to household or land occupation and was managed according to household. To deal with the corvee, the serfs had to maintain laborers for the family, which would facilitate cooperation and be beneficial to undertake the corvee. Marriage of the serfs was also dominated by the serf owners, the serfs had to report their marriages to their owners before the wedding, and if the serfs belonged to different owners, both of the owners should be asked to give permission. This situation baffled thriving and development of family in Tibet. The Democratic Reform removed basis of the old family structure and marriage restrictions, that is to say, the land system, allocating the land to all people with equal hand, enabling all Tibetan people to enjoy materials to survive and develop. Owning houses and freedom to find their lovers, the siblings and relatives, who originally belonged to one big family, were more likely to set up their own households. The results from the questionnaires indicated that after the Democratic Reform, big families

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① *Collection on Party History in Tibet*, Democrat Reform in Tibet, Tibetan People's Press, Aug. 1995.

that had members more than seven dramatically decreased, whilst the small families that had one, two or three members increased fast. This result suggests that more and more Tibetan people tend to leave the big family and live apart after the Democratic Reform.

1.4 Within four or five years after the Democratic Reform, the family-based individual economy remained in most agricultural-pasturing areas of Tibet, enabling the family-based economy to develop and thrive for a period. Since this family-based economy greatly catered to economic situation of Tibet at that time, it enabled Tibet to see a good harvest and economic prosperity for consecutive six years following the Democratic Reform.[①] Thus most Tibetan people think that this period is one of the best times for Tibet after its liberation, calling it the Golden Time of Tibet. Both social and economic progress took place in this period.

1.5 The Tibetan people think highly of the first and second batches of officials that were dispatched to Tibet to help the Tibetan people, holding that they are sophisticated about the policies, dedicated to their responsibilities, frugal in life style, and are warm-hearted to help them.

2 Shortly after the Democratic Reform and before the adequate development of the family-based economy, some other great social changes took place in urban, agricultural and pasturing areas of Tibet, which are People's Commune Movement and the Culture Revolution, with the former developing in the course of the latter. These social changes are politically oriented, resulting in political and social pace dramatically exceeding economic development, and lagging behind of productive capacity. The People's Commune and the Production Team

① See *Tibet in Contemporary China* (Part 1), Contemporary China Publishing House, Beijing, 1991.

played roles not only economic organizations beyond reach of families and tribes, but also administrative bodies. The People's Commune established in Tibet is owned by two-level authorities and is based on the Production team, which is an intermediate organization between the nation and the families, transferring the production materials from the families to the public, and allocating the products and resources according to the production teams. Meanwhile, all agricultural and cattle products were uniformly purchased and sold by the authorities and the family-owned lots and cattle were cancelled for a period. In urban areas, family-based commerce and service industries were clamped down as residual of the capitalism, and the handicraftsmen had to abandon their traditional jobs. Under this circumstance, the families shrank their functions to merely birth and hospice. These great changes forced the families to hand over the production function to the production teams, causing dramatic influences to all aspects of functions of Tibetan families.

2. 1 The political changes undermined the production functions of the families, indicating to a certain degree that the People's Commune Movement was trying to replace part of the family functions with the collective ownership.

2. 2 The political changes stressed class struggle and class classification, and intensified ideological propaganda and class awareness, causing weakening of family-centered blood lineage and containment of kin awareness.

2. 3 The family members were uniformly managed by the production teams. They worked and earned points, which were transformed to salary later. This situation changed the roles of the family members. For instance, women were more likely to take off their aprons participating in social activities, and children were offered opportunities to join social organizations outside the families, and were

able to earn more points, which helped them to gain favorable treatment in the family. In general, the people were experiencing a new type of social structure, which was challenging authoritativeness of the traditional family and its dominator. This situation intensified partition of the formerly big families, causing a trend of small-sized families.

2.4 Under the People's Commune System, the production, allocation and selling were uniformly planned by the nation, and the county government, the People's Commune, and the Production Team managed them from head to foot, causing the families keep a close tie with the collectiveness and the nation, and a more dependence onto them. People were accustomed to this equal apportion system, even in the 1990s that long after the Reform and Opening, some old Tibetan people were still reluctant to leave this sort of life style. For instance, the questionnaires collected from the Yoicha Township indicated that 26% of the respondents living in 46 households said they were satisfied with the People's Commune System. An old Tibetan farmer said that during that time (the People's Commune) "all people lived on the salary points, there was no poor nor rich, we saw the doctor free of charge, and the tuition was very cheap." However, most of the respondents (living in urban, agricultural, and pasturing areas) said they knew the People's Commune System but they were not satisfied with it.

2.5 The uniform purchasing and selling and equal partition system, namely, the planned economy system, is unable to prod the individuals to contribute more. In addition, the strict food grain management system and household registration system contained population migration and goods exchange, hampering and destroying the economic development. From 1966 onward, the food grain output of Tibet kept decreasing for three consecutive years, and stayed

stagnant for two years, and the major national economy indicators performed poorly, and fiscal income experienced negative changes. [1]

2. 6 Historically, the Tibetan people skillfully combined agriculture, stock raising, planting and family-based handicraft together, forming the most ideal family-based economic structure on the plateau. The Tibetan people survive depending on land and family-based handicraft industry, with the former providing food and the latter supplying utensils. Unfortunately, during the Culture Revolution, a large number of handicraftsmen were forced to become farmers. In the Gyantse town there were 500 handicraftsmen that were forced to become farmers. And in the wake of "cutting off the tail of the capitalism", 4, 000 manually operated looms were confiscated in Chanang County, resulting in devastation to family-based handicraft industry. The output value of traditional handicraft industry in Tibet dropped from RMB 8. 92 million in 1965 to less than RMB 3 million in 1976[2], dramatically decreasing the family income of Tibetan people. Per capita income at Banjorlhunbo Village of Gyantse County from 1965 through 1976 was always less than RMB 50, and the per capita food grain was fluctuating around 300-350kg. In general, the entire economy of Tibet became stagnant and the family-based economy was heavily destroyed.

2. 7 Under the People's Commune System, politics and communes united together and the officials frequently visited the villages, mostly for carrying out ideological propaganda. The officials lived and ate and worked together with the farmers, directing production of the communes and the production teams bypassing the

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[1] See *Tibet in Contemporary China* (Part 1), Contemporary China Publishing House, Beijing, 1991.

[2] See *Tibet in Contemporary China* (Part 1), Contemporary China Publishing House, Beijing, 1991.

local heads. Under this circumstance, the production teams resembled a super family and the officials mimicked parents of the super family, thus, the farmers became accustomed to depending on the officials. In our question: "who will you look for help when you encounter difficulty or dispute?" Most of the respondents filled in "the officials." Frankly speaking, this dependence began to take shape after the Democratic Reform, and became intensified by the People's Commune Movement, resulting in undermining of authoritativeness of the household masters.

In summary, during this period, the highly centralized People's Commune system dramatically intensified role and capacity of the collectiveness and in a big way undermined power of the family, giving heavy shock to social and cultural significance of the family. Since this shock lacked support from productive power growth, it ended up in failure.

3 The Reform and Opening policies and the Economic System Reform that began by the end of 1978 also achieved great success in Tibet, causing great changes to both urban and rural areas of Tibet, manifesting as below:

3.1 After the Reform and Opening, the "two long unchanged policies" were enforced in the rural areas of Tibet, namely, allowing the households in pasturing areas to own and raise cattle for a long time; and permitting the households in agricultural areas to own and manage land permanently. These policies in fact handed over ownership and use rights of cattle and land to the individual families, helping to transform the herdsmen and farmers from simple laborers who depend on salary points to double roles of both laborers and managers. This transformation has dramatically prodded the Tibetan people to develop their family-based industry, and promoted development of production, owing to which, the Tibetan people

increased their income and improved their life quality. At Banjorlhunbo Village of Gyantse County, from 1976 through 1994, the per capita food grain output increased from 365kg to 1469kg, and per capita income jumped from RMB 49.53 to RMB 842.30. Per capita income in 1994 was 13 times higher than that in 1976. Questionnaires collected from 40 households living in Yoicha Village of Amdo County indicated that after the Reform and Opening, per capita cattle number was 128.98% higher than that before the Democratic Reform, was 36 more than before the Reform and Opening (92.86). Now the rich households that own more than 120 cows and sheep account for 20% of the total households, and 85% plus of herdsman households have achieved medium or higher living standard. When asked changes in living standard after the "two long unchanged policies", most respondents answered "dramatically improved;" and when asked "which period do you think is the best time in Tibet?" (before the Democratic Reform, after the Democratic Reform, during the People's Commune, and after the Reform and Opening), the respondents unanimously hold that after the Reform and Opening is the best time, expressing their satisfaction and upholding to the policies implemented in Tibet after the CPC's third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee.

3.2 Before the 1980s, most laborers in Tibet engaged themselves in simple agriculture and cattle raising industry, with a small portion undertaking side occupations, leaving the structure of laborer employment monotonous. After the Reform and Opening, the closed and autarkic economy in agricultural and pasturing areas of Tibet slowly turned to be an open and diversified commodity economy. In the pasturing areas the herdsmen major in cattle raising and deal with other side occupations as well; and in the agricultural areas, the farmers sow and get in on their land and handle many other industries.

Stimulated by the market-oriented economy, the herdsmen and farmers begin to set feet on industry, construction, shipment, commerce and food and beverage service by capitalizing on the opened market and convenient traffic, thus forming a new industry structure and laborer distribution, in which the agriculture, cattle raising, forest industry, and side occupations are well coordinated. In some areas, the township-based enterprises spring up, leaving some ex-farmers to become merchants or workers. In 1985, there had been 12 thousand households that engaged in some special industries, with 1300 households serving transportation and occupying 1200 vehicles. In 1989, the agricultural and pasturing areas of Tibet earned RMB 0.304 billion from the side occupations and township-based industries, accounting for one third of total industrial and agricultural output value of Tibet.[1] We found in our survey that many rich families got rich depending on the side occupations. At Tohlung Dechen County of Lhasa, 25% of the total population engaged themselves in diversified side occupations in 1993.[2] This situation indicates that the traditional autarkic economy in agricultural and pasturing areas of Tibet begin to transform to an open commodity economy.

3.3 With the market developing and the commodity economy fledgling, both of the urban and rural Tibetan people have been satisfied with food and clothes. This situation urges more Tibetan people to do trade affairs. A random survey over 1175 people in 301 households in Lhasa indicated that 24.4% of the people engaged in

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① See *Tibet in Contemporary China*, Contemporary China Publishing House, Beijing, 1991.

② See the *Collection on China's Situations-Volume on Lhasa*, Beijing. China Encyclopedia Press, 1995.

trade industry, being the highest rate among all the walks.[1] To be merchants and earning money have become a new trend among the citizens in Lhasa, which has urged a large amount of Tibetan people to become workers serving the third industry in private-owned or collectiveness-owned business. They devote themselves to commerce, food and beverage industry, hotels, services, and transportation. In particular, some families coalesced running some processing factories and companies. The good news is that some herdsmen and farmers have left the pasture or land, moving to urban areas and markets outside in a bid to seeking fortune. Thus, the herdsmen and farmers are unleashed from the land and pasture that had contained them for thousands of years, moving to the towns, counties, such as Nagchu, Shigatse and Lhasa. The migration in turn promotes further development of commodity economy of agricultural and pasturing areas of Tibet.

3.4 After having been satisfied with food and clothes and with economy and living standard keeping improved, the Tibetan people begin to look for better enjoyment. They pay for beyond food and clothes, but some high-end consumer goods from the market. Their consumption patterns are becoming diversified and their consumption structure is changing dramatically.

(1) With respect to living condition, both rural and urban Tibetan people have houses to live, what they want to do is to overhaul their old houses to new ones, and move into floored buildings from the single-story houses. For instance, what farmers living in Gyantse want most after having enough food is to move into beautiful new houses equipped with decent furniture. Among the 44 households at Ban

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① See the *Collection on China's Situations-Volume on Lhasa*, Beijing. China Encyclopedia Press, 1995.

Village of Gyantse, 41 households, namely, 93% of the households in 1989 constructed their new houses after the Reform and Opening. Furthermore, 22 households in 1994 overhauled the new single-story houses into floored houses. At present, per capita room area has reached 25.4 sqm. Some new houses are well decorated, exceeding beauty of house of former noble Para. In the Lu Gu residential community in Lhasa, 1596 people there have moved into permanent houses that are built with steel and cement, and all the homes are supplied with tap water and electricity. Per capita room area there is 2.6 times higher than that before the Democratic Reform. Most herdsmen living at Yoicha township of Amdo, a survey site, have become semi-settled.

(2) With respect to food supply, the Tibetan people have not only enough food to survive, but also they are seeking more nutritious food and diversified diet structure. Although they still need large amount of food grain, such as tsamba, which is keeping decreasing, they are adding more and more non-staple foodstuffs into their diet. This trend is particularly apparent in pasturing and urban areas. Our survey indicated that consumption of tsamba among herdsmen living in Amdo has been keeping decreasing, need for wheat flour and rice and fruits is increasing. Some households will buy dozens of kinds of vegetables from the market and most households will buy tens of kilograms of fruits and candies annually. This situation tells that non-staple foodstuffs keep increasing in the household diet and food grains that the farmers themselves produce keep decreasing although they still play a role in the diet. This trend results from thriving of commodity economy in the agricultural and pasturing areas, intensified migration and booming income. Urban citizens living in Lhasa have experienced a faster increment in the consumption of food and beverage and non-staple foodstuffs, particularly, they pay more and more year by year

for culture and entertainment, which are not necessary for subsistence. This trend reflects that the Tibetan people are earning more money and their living standard is keeping improved.

(3) With respect to apparels, both rural and urban Tibetan people desire clothes more than covering their bodies, but harmonious color and novel style. Their need for medium and high-end apparels is keeping increasing. Besides traditional home-made leather clothes, some herdsmen favor clothes made with chemical fiber, woolen cloth or wool. Herdsmen living in Yoicha village of Amdo love to wear convenient clothes that are popular among the Han nationality. Among 45 households surveyed, each household had about 8 suits of Han nationality style; this is a very apparent change. At Ban village of Gyantse, a zamarra edged with roe hide valuing RMB 200 has entered into wardrobes of common households. More and more people living in Lhasa wear clothes of Han nationality style or western business suit. The urban people particularly love to wear convenient, novel style and expensive apparels. They upgrade their apparels faster than those living in rural areas.

(4) With respect to utensils and household electronics, the Tibetan people have turned their eyes from common daily utensils and durable goods to high-end durable consumer goods, paying more and more money on entertainment and enjoyment products. Our survey indicated that the high-end durable consumer goods, such as television, washing machine, tape recorder, video camera, automobile and motorcycle entered into the households after the 1980s' Reform and Opening.

(5) Before the Reform and Opening, although the laborers in Tibet kept increasing their income year by year, they merely consumed their money on food and clothes. After the Reform and Opening, their consumption becomes diversified, besides more money

paid for food, clothes, housing and utensils, their dispense on entertainment, marriage, and funeral, which are not necessary for subsistence, keeps increasing. Karaoke, dance, billiards, television, films and videos have become contents of entertainment and leisure of youth living in Lhasa, and this trend is spreading to rural areas.

3. 5 Before the Reform and Opening, in agricultural and pasturing areas, the People's Commune and the Production Team took all kinds of responsibilities, orchestrating production, exchanging information, organizing entertainment activities and mediating conflicts. Under this circumstance, the herdsmen and farmers collectively worked and entertained, leaving the public life the second environment under which the herdsmen and farmers survive. During this period, family became the first environment that the herdsmen and farmers survive, undertaking few responsibilities, such as production, life, siring and provide for the aged. After the Reform and Opening, the land is allocated to the families, bringing about changes to social organization in the agricultural and pasturing areas, on one hand, again strengthening comprehensive responsibilities of the family, urging the family to play an important role in production, life and reproduction, and arousing the blood lineage awareness and family sympathy that were once destroyed by the culture revolution; on the other hand, this situation ruined the collective economy. Without domination over land and cattle, the basic production materials, the administrative control means become weakened. Thus, the social changes that have been brought about by the land contracted management system to the agricultural and pasturing areas of Tibet is still in a primitive status, requiring a new management model to fulfill some functions of the family.

3.6 The results from the questionnaires indicated that among the vital policies, the "freedom in religious belief" is among the most

known policies among the Tibetan people. 90.5% of Tibetan families said that they knew and understood this policy and said this policy was very good. Nobody said this policy was bad. This result suggests that after the Reform and Opening, the Tibetan people have been enjoying the most adequate freedom in religious belief and they are satisfied with the religious policy of China.

3.7 Before the Reform and Opening, broadcasting and newspapers dominated information media in Tibet. However, they were unavailable for many backward rural areas. Decades after the Reform and Opening, with technology developing and income increasing, the mass media begin to take more and more diversified forms and radio, tape recorder and television become popular among common families. Among 46 herdsman households who lived in Yoicha township of Amdo, which is located 5000 meters above the sea level and several hundred kilometers away from Lhasa, there had 21 tape recorders and 19 radio sets, most of them bought after the Reform and Opening, depending on them the herdsmen know events home and abroad and narrowing gap between them and the outside world. The Ban village of Gyantse was a poor village resided by house serfs in the past. Four decades later this village has 37 radio sets and 13 television sets. In Lhasa, watching television has become an important part of daily life of the citizens. Among the 45 households of Lu Gu residential community, there were 35 color television sets and 14 black-and-white television sets. The television sets and radio sets have dramatically enriched off-duty life of the Tibetan people living in both rural and urban areas, causing subtle influence on their mind and values. This will bring about great influence to life style and values to the Tibetan people in the future.

3.8 In this book there are several chapters focusing on marriage and family issues, although they require more investigations and

researches in the future. Viewed from results of our survey, since the Democratic Reform, the size of Tibetan families is tapering in general, and the families are developing to the nuclear families.

However, since the 1980s, with the market-oriented economy developing, the size of families in agricultural and pasturing areas has been showing an extending trend, and the big families and the extended families are increasing. For instance, average family member number at the Ban village in Gyantse increased from 5.4 before the Reform and Opening to 6 after the Reform and Opening; big families with 7 or plus members apparently jumped up; and the proportion of stem family increased from 28.57% to 38.64%. At Yoicha township of Amdo, the rate of stem family increased from 31.82% before the Reform and Opening to 45.53% after the Reform and Opening. This change is due to the emergence of the land contracted management system (in actual enforcement, the land is usually allocated to the individual households), which again knots the production and the families, stressing the key function of the families, namely, the production function, resulting in breaking up of collective working and reviving of family-based cooperation among the family members. This change on one hand highly caters to current economic level of agricultural and pasturing areas of Tibet, and has greatly promoted self-employed economy there. On the other hand, viewed from social organization, this new system again enables the family to be a core for organizing production, reviving the family functions that had been undermined by the political movements, particularly, the culture revolution, and causing enlargement of family size and springing up of big families.

Whilst, families in urban areas of Lhasa are continuing to be smaller and diversified, that is to say, the number of nuclear family, single-parent family and single-person family is increasing and the

number of stem family is declining. Data collected from 45 households of Lu Gu residential community of Lhasa showed that the percentage of stem family decreased 7.5% around the Reform and Opening; and average number of family member dropped from 4.8 before the Reform and Opening to 3.7 after the Reform and Opening; and the percentage of single-person family increased 10 per cents, from zero to 7 households. The family patterns become diversified as well. Besides the nuclear family, stem family, single-parent family and single-person family, family consisting unmarried couple appears. These new family patterns are aftermath of urbanization and industrialization of Tibet and are spin-off of new family values. In addition, smaller family and nuclear family are more suitable for urbanization and industrialization and migration that are prodded by the market-oriented economy. Another constituent that supports the new family patterns is the increasing independence awareness among the youth living in Lhasa. The Reform and Opening and the prosperous market have offered more employment opportunities to youth living in urban areas of Lhasa, weakening tie between the parents and their young ones. The employed young people (or doing business or running enterprise) manipulate their own income without counting on their parents, some even giving money to their parents. This economic independence enables the young generation to make decision on their own discretion, accepting the traditional big family in which all family members live together, while after marriage favoring more independent and freer small family. This is another factor that contributes to the emergence of the new family patterns.

The scenario in rural areas of Tibet is at the opposite end, where more laborers usually mean more income. This situation highly incites the herdsmen and farmers to enlarge their family size, contributing to the increasing birth rate in the agricultural and pasturing areas of

Tibet. In urban areas it is consumption rather than production that plays a leading role in the family functions, undoubtedly resulting in smaller family size in the urban areas of Lhasa than that in the rural areas.

Economic Reforms: Effects on Household Patterns of Tibetan Nomads

(**with** Hai Miao)

Since the 1980' s, China' s economic reforms, known in rural China as the "household responsibility system," have shifted communities away from collectivization and toward entrepreneurship and privatization. These reforms have led to major changes for rural Chinese families involving household composition, marriage arrangements, and childbearing (Davis and Harrell 1993, 1-22). Local variations in culture and economy have also influenced those transformations in specific ways (Levine, 1994; Gladney, 1991). The impact on the family system has not been uniform; rather, there have been distinct consequences in different areas. While changes in rural Chinese families have attracted the attention of many China scholars (Johnson 1993; Selden 1993; Yan 1997), little has been published on ethnic minorities and even less on Tibetans, who have also experienced far-reaching social and economic transformations. This paper attempts to explore how the reforms in the 1980s have affected domestic organization in three Tibetan communities in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), and particularly how changes in the market economy in ethnic Tibetan areas have affected family

patterns.

More specifically, the paper will demonstrate the extent to which domestic organization has changed in response to the new land tenure system and new economic and political circumstances. It also will examine factors other than government policies that have influenced family patterns and structure among Tibetans.

Scholars have differentiated families according to types. Murdock (1949) classifies families into five types based on kinship relationships (Nimkoff and Middleton 1960, 215); (1) the nuclear family, which consists of fathers and mother with their unmarried children. This type is also known as an "elementary family" (Levi-Strauss 1963) or "simple family" (Hammel and Laslett 1974, 215); (2) compound families, formed by uniting two or more nuclear families through a common husband and wife, as in polygyny or polyandry, respectively; (3) extended families, normally consisting of at least two siblings or cousins in each of at least two adjacent generations; (4) lineal families, comprising at least one individual in the senior generation but at least two individuals in the next generations; (5) stem families, usually consisting of one or two related families, other than polygamous unions of the same generations.

Murdock defines lineal families as "small extended families," and stem families as "minimal extended families." Following Murdock, other researchers have divided families into two types, calling lineal and stem families "extended families" (Nimkoff and Middleton 1960), and nuclear and compound families "independent families." This last definition is similar to the classification provided by Dargyay in her discussion of Tibetan families (1982, 33).

Scholars of Chinese family studies usually identify two types of families based on the numbers of couples in each generation (Pan 1987; Baker 1979; Davis and Harrell 1993; Cohen 1970). For this

paper, we adopt a modified form of the classification utilized by such scholars. We add the single-parent family as a category since it is common among Tibetan nomadic pastoralists. We have classified the types Tibetan families as follows: (1) nuclear families, consisting of couple and/or their unmarried children; (2) extended families, consisting of parents with two or more children with their spouses and children; (3) single-parent families, consisting of either an unmarried mother or father with his or her illegitimate children; (4) other families, including families containing brothers and sisters, families of grandparents and grandchildren, nuclear families with either a husband's or wife's unmarried siblings, polyandrous families, or single persons with adopted children, and one-person families[1].

Traditional Theories of Family Type and Their Determinants

Before discussing changes in family structures in Tibetan nomadic areas, we must review various theoretical approaches to this subject. Comparative data suggest that most societies have small, nuclear family households; corporate extended families are rare (Wilk and Netting 1984, 7-9). But why do some societies have extended families while others have small, nuclear families? Is this determined by economic and social structures, as asserted by some scholars (Young and Salih 1987, 352), or are they affected by religion and traditions in specific cultural contexts? Although efforts have been made to try to formulate a general theory of family systems and changes within them, the correlation between family type and various determining factors is still a controversial issue (Caldwell 1992).

If we can classify family systems as "independent" (nuclear) or "extended" (stem, lineal, or fully extended), we will find that

extended families are more common among agricultural and nomadic societies, and that nuclear systems are more prevalent among residents of Lhasa and other small towns.

It can be said that the type of subsistence influences family type through demands for family labor. It is clear that there is some association between traditional agriculture, animal husbandry, and extended family households. There are close correlations between the type of family and a particular subsistence system. No matter what the productive system is, the appearance of the extended family is due to its ability to provide extra labor for various incompatible activities among the family.

Yet nuclear families predominate widely even in rural areas of Tibet, and nuclear families existed even before urbanization and industrialization occured in Tibet. Therefore, it may not be a necessary connection between urbanization or industrialization and the small, simple, nuclear family of contemporary Tibet. Even in Lhasa, Maintaining the extended family kinship system constitutes the basis of the economical and financial power of privileged social Groups. The model drew heavily on the experience of Western Europe and North America has failed to explain family structure in many Asian and African populations.

In recent decades, scholars have conducted in-depth field work among various rural communities in China and focused on the changes in rural family systems in response to the new economic reform policy. Their conclusions are diverse. Some have suggested that rural family structure in economically developed areas has changed from stem to small nuclear and husband-wife families. These changes in family structure have been attributed to industrialization and urbanization in rural areas where nonagricultural employment opportunities are created by the reforms (Yand 1994; Lei 1991). Others, however, have

proposed that the average household size increased due to greater demand for labor to fulfill various economic activities. They further pointed out that trends in household size and composition have not been uniform, but rather vary according to the economic incentives of the local economy or the strictness of the planned-birth campaign.

Although it is difficult to generalize about a nationwide trend in family patterns, as Whyte (1992) has summarized, there are two alternative theories about the change in rural family structure, both suggesting a response to market-oriented reforms. One theory asserts that the reappearance of the family as a productive unit creates new incentives to delay family division and leads to larger and more complex households. The other maintains the new, nonagricultural labor employment leads to a continual shift away from the traditional family structure and values toward small, nuclear households.

Two main policies, namely, strict population control and liberal economic reforms, resulted in changes in family structure, composition, and family size. The effects of these policies are varied: family sized declined sharply in a close-to-town village due to the one-child policy. By contrast, the reduction in family sized in rural area villages was less drastic since the enforcement of the population control policy was les strict, and families were allowed to have two and more children due to the relaxed family-planning policies toward ethnic minorities.[2] Subsistence patterns have had a more diverse effect on family processes and composition. In those with subsistence farming as an economic resource decollectivization, family composition stood steady with a consistently higher percentage of nuclear families as in the pre-re-form era. By contrast, villages with wage labor and nonfarm production as main economic resources had a higher percentage of stem families and correspondingly lower percentages of nuclear families.

Clarke, among the few Western Tibetologists studying Tibetan communities, carried out his field research among a Tibetan pastoral nomadic community in Qinghai province. He focused on reform and its impacts on pastoralism in Tibetan areas. Clarke argues that with the introduction of the "responsibility system" into Tibetan nomadic areas, "the joint rights of the household to pasture, together with the economic and management advantages of a division of labor that can be made because of the larger numbers in an extended family, militate against fission into nuclear families" (1992, 402). Thus Clarke suggests that nomads in Qinghai keep their extended families mainly due to economic considerations. However, another case study in a southwestern Tibetan farming community (Levine 1994) shows that the new system of land tenure after the 1980s has actually led few young people to establish traditional co-residential marriage and families; instead these young people prefer informal unions which require no co-residence of family members and pooling of resources. Since these young people tend to stay with their natal family members, this inevitably reduces the potential for the establishment of extended families involving a married couple, although it still could be a generationally extended family containing only siblings.

We suggest that in addition to the demographic and social factors that shape the developmental cycle of Tibetan families, economic reforms and transformation in land ownership also brought about changes in domestic organization. In what follows we will examine whether household size changed in Yid-chab village over the past four decades and then explain possible reasons for this change.

Table 1 shows the household size in Yid-chab village in Amdo. It is clear that the average household size in this village increased steadily between 1959 and 1980, and then dropped in the most recent period. Before the democratic reforms, the average household size was

5.2 people. It grew to 5.6 in the period of the post democratic reforms, and in the commune period reached its largest size: 6.1. In addition, the number of large households with seven or more members was the greatest, namely, 38.6 percent, during the period of 1996-1980, the largest household having sixteen members, This statistic does not support Selden's (1993) hypothesis that collectivization inevitably resulted in a sharp reduction in average household size. With the limited data at hand, however, we still cannot account for the fact that large households with seven or more members were so popular during the commune period, representing the highest percentage of household type for that stage.

Table 1 Household Size in Yid-chab Village

No. of household Members	to 1959 No. (%)	1959-1966 No. (%)	1966-1980 No. (%)	1980-1994 No. (%)
1-3	9(24.3)	11(26.8)	12(27.3)	9(19.6)
4-6	19(51.4)	17(41.5)	15(34.1)	24(52.2)
7 or more	9(24.3)	13(31.7)	17(38.6)	13(28.3)
Total households	37(100.0)	41(100.0)	44(100.0)	46(100.0)
Total persons	197	229	269	225
Average size of household	5.2	5.6	6.1	5.5

Source: 1995 Household Survey.

After the implementation of the "responsibility system" in the early eighties, household size in Yid-chad village dropped slightly: to 5.5 persons on average. When asked about this reduction in population in detail, we were told that some people married and moved out of the village, some found jobs in Amdo County, and some joined the army. According to the fourth nationwide census in 1990,

the average household size in Amdo County in 1982 was 4. 8persons, and rose slightly to 4. 91 persons in 1990. Meanwhile, the average household size in Nagpur prefecture in creased from 4. 9 members in 1982 to 5. 26 in 1990. Thus, one might presume that the average household size of the nomadic population in Tibet began increasing after the new economic reform policy was carried out in the eighties. However, our findings obviously run contrary to larger regional statistics. This contradiction might have resulted from the fairly active migration and mobility among the population under study, or it could be attributed to the inaccuracy of data coming from defective questions asked about family size. It also could be due to errors in the government statistics or the different ways they phrased the questions about families. It is also likely these minor variations might be due to chance or calculation error given the small sample.[3] Table 1 also shows that after the new economic reform, four-to six-person households dropped 7. 7 and 10. 3percent respectively.

Table 2 Household Size in Yid-chab Village

	to 1959	1959-1966	1966-1980	1980-1994
Types of families	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)
Single-parent families	5(24.3)	11(26.8)	12(27.3)	9(19.6)
Nuclear families	20(51.4)	17(41.5)	15(34.1)	24(52.2)
Extended families	10(24.3)	13(31.7)	17(38.6)	13(28.3)
Other families	3(7.9)	3(7.3)	2(4.5)	4(8.7)
Total	38(100.0)	41(100.0)	44(100.0)	46(100.0)

Source: 1995 Household Survey.

However, changes in household size are insufficient to explain the changing patterns in family system. More than size, it is the structure of the domestic group that is most significant because it reveals a certain form of organization which governs the transmission of

practices and cultural values, and links family, work, power, and possessions.

Table 2 shows clearly changing patterns in household structure. During the time prior to 1959 and during the commune period, nuclear families were dominant, accounting for 52. 6, 46. 3, and 45. 5 percent of the total families. After the 1980s, nuclear families decreased 8. 5 percent while extended families increased by 13. 7 percent. They now comprise a full 47. 8 percent of family types. Extended families increased steadily, and rose substantially (34. 1 percent) during the commune period, reaching their highest percentage in the eighties (47. 8 percent).

As in other Chinese rural areas, nuclear families were the majority type in the nomadic Amdo area. However, extended families increased during the commune period and after the 1980s. The question is: Why did this occur? In the following section we shall discuss whether this phenomenon is consistent with Whyte's hypothesis that the reappearance of family as a productive unit creates new incentives leading to larger households. What is especially interesting is that these data suggest that families, at least in Yid-chab, have been moving toward becoming more extended and complex. Nor did extended families during the commune period fade away as suggested by others (Selden 1993). The remainder of this thesis therefore explores the factors responsible for these variations in household patterns. In particular we shall consider whether they are due to the unanticipated consequences of diverse legal and economic reforms-particularly land tenure system reforms-or the result of the expansion of the market economy, industrialization, and urbanization. We will also consider yet another explanation: that this change is due to the resurgence of traditional cultural ideologies.

Household Pattern Changes and Their Determinants

Many scholars of family studies hold that economic factors are mainly responsible for explaining changes in family size. For instance, Pitkin (1959, 169-73) indicates that families tend to extend when they assume full economic responsibility for their subsistence. Hammel (1977, 172) cites a diverse mix of "economic" or "ecological" factors, including labor needs in production, defensive needs, care of children, and taxation, as the "underlying functional reasons" for the variation in size of domestic groups. Also, regional diversity, the development cycle of domestic groups, gender sex-role systems, and kinship as a symbolic system should also be taken into consideration when studying domestic organization. This critique is supported by our fieldwork data in the sense that no single factor mentioned above could convincingly explain the various changes in the family system. Rather, changes in land tenure should be considered responsible for changes in the family system in Tibetan nomadic areas.

Adaptations to Reforms of Pastoral Management

The family as a basic economic unit needed enough members so that various essential activities could be carried out. Besides, households with more members benefited economically through shared expenses, labor, security, and companionship. Thus, households welcomed more members to increase the work force. In addition to economic interests, a large family was favored because it could fulfill the corvee labor for long-distance trade and military obligation for tribal leaders. In our data, the total thirty-eight households, and this was also found in Sethar, a nomadic community in eastern Tibet with

62 percent of the total households (Gelek 1983). However, the interesting difference was that, in the traditional society in Sethar, 50 to 60 percent of families were extended; while only 26 percent were extended among the population we studied which Gelek attributes the prevalence of extended families in Sethar to the demands of labor in diverse pastoral activities.

Democratic reform between 1959 and 1966 did not cause significant changes in household size and structure because in the nomadic Amdo area after 1959, ownership of livestock remained, as before, in the hands of the nomad families. The only difference was that the ownership of grassland was transferred from estate owners to the collective. This change did not lead to a reduction in household size. On the contrary, the average size of household after the democratic reforms in creased slightly. Among the twenty-three old households in Yid-chab village, ten experienced an increase in the number of household members, seven remained the same, and the remaining six households grew smaller. Meanwhile, the number of nuclear and extended families remained almost identical. Thus it seems that the democratic reforms, which involved no devolution of grassland ownership to individual households, had no great impact on household organization.

During the commune period, as elsewhere in rural China, the collective owned not only grassland, but also livestock. In the North Wind Commnue in Amdo county, each household member in the commune received three head of livestock for subsistence. Production and labor allocation were the responsibility of the "production teams." Therefore, the productive functions of the traditional economic unit-individual households-were diminished. Collectivization not only weakened the household as a productive unit, but also reduced the power of the family head over the sons because control over the

utilization of grassland, livestock, and labor that used to belong to the family head was now taken by the collective. In this system, every family member made a living by earning points awarded by the production teams. This provided opportunity for siblings to separate from their natal family and set up their own families with the points each of them earned. Leaving one's family had no impact on ownership of grassland and livestock. Therefore, it could be expected that the declining role of the family as an independent productive unit would lead to earlier division and reduction in the number of extended families (see Selden 1993, 147).

However, our research data call into question this logic. The average household size during this period of time was larger than in any of the other three periods: families consisting of seven and more persons were numerous, and the number of extended families was also greater than in the other two periods. Our observation is also supported by Huang (1992, 25-38) who found that extended families prevailed in a farming village in southern China. However, he did not explain this. Johnson (1983, 215-24), in his study of a northern rural community, claims that government policies restricting mobility and emphasizing village self-sufficiency have strengthened the practice of patrilineal extended families. The available data are not conclusive, but I would suggest this might also have been the case in Yid-chab, although families were not conclusive, but I would suggest this might also have been the case in Yid-chab, although families were not necessarily patrilineal. Two additional factors could also be responsible for this change. First, before the 1980s, China's birth-control policy had not been enforced among the minority populations, and particularly not among the pastoral nomads in such a remote, isolated frontier region.[4] Nomads did not use birth control. Besides, infant mortality declined, due to improved health care services.

According to our data, the crude birth rate (CBR) in Amdo is 33.1 per 1,000. This is consistent with Goldstein's findings among another Tibetan nomadic community which is similar ecologically with the population we studied. Both data show that the CBR in Tibetan nomadic areas resembles the CBR of high-growth countries such as India and Outer Mongolia. Therefore, families may have increased in size due to a high rate of reproduction and improved child survival. The second factor is related to the point system imposed during the commune period. At that time, each family member made a living by earning points which made it possible for children to separate from their natal families. Nevertheless, there were still a number of families that preferred to keep the family large. According to one of my informants, these families wanted to prevent the partition of a family to pool the points together to make a better life, operating on the assumption that everyone was paid equally by the commune. Thus the more labor force one family possessed, the more points it would accumulate, and potentially the richer it would become. Also, sharing would reduce living expenses for the whole family. Still others argue that separation from the natal family was made possible since each could make a living with the points he or she earned and the partition would not diminish any standard of living.

In the early 1980s, decollectivization was initiated in Tibetan nomadic areas, followed by nationwide agricultural reform. Pastureland and livestock were allocated to individual households. One feature that deserves close attention is that the livestock were allocated to individuals by head count, whereas grassland was allocated to the household as a whole rather than to individuals within each family. This allocation system actually makes division of the household difficult to realize since members can take livestock with them upon separation, whereas grassland is not portable and it is very

difficult for out-marrying children to take a piece of grassland with them, although it does happen in other nomadic areas. We would assume this is a potential factor favoring the increase of extended families in this nomadic community.

Besides, the household contract system weakened the former collective structure and strengthened the role of households as productive units in agriculture, in sideline production, and in market activity. As elsewhere in rural China, capitalist reforms led nomadic pastoralists into market activities and stimulated various sideline occupations. Direct access to the Qinghai-Tibet Highway has provided the people of Amdo with new opportunities. It has stimulated some of them to pool labor resources to engage in pastoralism, while others carry out long-distance trade outside the local areas, or open restaurants, tea houses, and gasoline stations along the highway (see also Zhao 1991, 206). The average annual per capita income among Amdo nomads, which was only RMB 526 ($92. 30) in 1986 to 1994, income from transportation, handicrafts, commerce, and restaurants increased from 14. 9 percent to 41. 1 percent of total annual per capita incomes (Zhou 1996, 419). Once again, each family found that it needed to pool its labor to conduct various tasks, as it did during the pre-commune period. Although the average size of the household decreased slightly during this last state, the number of extended families increased while the number of nuclear families decreased slightly during this last stage, the number of extended families increased while the number of nuclear families decreased considerably. Thus we may draw the conclusion that involvement in the market economy prompted nomadic families to conduct profitable sideline production in addition to subsistence production. We assume that the involvement in sideline work also potentially favored the spread of extended families. However, this is merely a hypothesis that

requires further investigation.

Table 3 Labor Force and Incomes in Yid-chab Village, 1994

No. of laborers	No. of households	Mean per capita income (in RMB)
5	3	1181.6
4	2	994.5
3	1	910.5
2	4	544.1

Source: 1995 Household Survey.

In addition to the land tenure changes that have considerably influenced household patterns of this nomadic community in the TAR, we also suggest that distinctive characteristics of the local economy might have favored the existence of the extended family in nomadic communities. It should be noted that the subsistence economy, particularly the mode of production, has remained unchanged for centuries, being in pastoral production, and still relies heavily on the strength and size of the labor force because of the generally low technological level of the area and its challenging natural environment. Modernization has not altered the mode of production in Tibetan nomadic areas. Although certain kinds of machines, such as milk separators, have been introduced in pastoral production and have effectively reduced the intensity of labor, the size and the strength of the labor force decide the wealth of each family. Our data showed a strong correlation between families with more members and a strong labor force and the income of the family. Extended families and those with more laborers were much better off than those with fewer members, a weak labor force, and large numbers, of dependents (Table 3)[5]. However, only a small sample is available, so this assumption is not conclusive. Nor do we have data to show whether

the nomads we interviewed realized the potential relationship between the wealth of a family and the labor force.

Distinctive Ethnic Background and Its Impact on Household Pattern Changes in Amdo

We mentioned earlier in this paper that Harrell (1993) attributes changes in household structure among the Yi people to the favorable government policy toward ethnic minorities. This argument is also supported by our study in that less regulation of birth-control policy among the Tibetan nomadic population could also explain in part the large size of family households. Unlike some areas in rural China, where the restrictive population-control policy was one of the main factors affecting family structure, the situation in Tibet is just the opposite. Early research among Tibetan nomads showed that no coercive birth-control policy had been carried out until recently (Goldstein 1986). This is further confirmed by our research. Seventeen women of childbearing age between twenty-five and fifty-nine in Yid-chab village had given birth to seventy-six children between 1984 and 1994, 4.4 births each on average, with the average number of children for women of forty-five years old and over being 6.1. In addition, 44.4 percent of the fifty-four women in this village had five or more children. One of them gave birth to twelve children, with seven still alive. Obviously the number of children has an immediate effect on the size of the family and it will have important structural effects in the future. Members in 86 percent of the households surveyed also informed us that having more children would provide security in old age.

Household Structure as the ideological Reflection of Tibetan Nomads

Kinship as a symbolic system should also be given equal attention when domestic organization is under study. Yanagisako asserts that "kinship enables us to make sense of the diversity in family and kinship organization within a single society" (1979, 193). In this sense, the existence of extended families throughout the four decades and their steady increase in numbers should not only be explained by the nomads' economy, but also by the well-kept ideology of traditional life style, both among pastoralists and agriculturalists. Traditionally, the ideal Tibetan family pattern was three generations living in an household (Dargyay 1982; Gelek 1991; Clarke 1992). According to Tibetans, large families bring good luck and prosperity. As a research assistant in a research project conducted in the summer of 1994 in another Tibetan nomadic community in northwest Sichuan province,[6] Hai Miao collected data on the household structure there as well. In 1983, 76 percent of the seventeen households were nuclear households, while 18 percent were extended families. In 1994, the total households in this village increased to twenty. Sixty percent of families were nuclear, while extended families accounted for 30 percent of total households. Most significantly, the average household size in creased sharply from 3.9 in 1983 to 7.1 in 1994. The two nomadic communities are similar ecologically. Both communities experienced an increase of extended households, which we would not think due to coincidence. We argue that large families are preferred among Tibetan nomads. If this is the case for Yid-chab village, one can infer that the extended family is not a new phenomenon appearing in Tibetan pastoral areas, but rather a revitalization of a traditional

lifestyle driven by traditional Tibetan ideologies. However, since our questionnaire did not inquire about the nomad's attitude toward familial ideology, this assumption needs to be proved with further research.

One particular feature that distinguishes Tibetan nomadic areas from inland rural china is that single-parent families have always existed. In nomadic areas, people may have children without being married. Some women never marry, and remain in their parental tents. If they have had children with someone, they are not blamed, and can also gain a few animals and occasional assistance from the child's father when the time for seasonal migration comes. A number of children in our survey were born in these circumstances. Both mothers and the illegitimate children were accepted by society, shared equal rights to family property, and faced no discrimination. According to 1990 statistics, there the illegitimate children in Yid-chab village, and they enjoyed the same inheritance rights as legitimate children. As another example, in Washu Sethar, Tibetan nomadic area in the northwest of Sichuan province, traditionally a Tibetan nomads groups alliance existed consisting of forty-eight tribes, and the tribal leader was an illegitimate child from a single-parent family.

Individuals as Social Agents and Their Effects on Household Patterns

We have examined the factors that might have brought about changes in family patterns in the Amdo nomadic community. They are mainly social, cultural, economic, and political. However, we should keep in mind that individuals who are agents of societies also play a crucial role in the formation of the social system. This is evidenced by

the prevalence of Magpa households in the population under study. One notable and interesting feature in Tibetan kinship is the prevalence of the man to his wife's tent. It is well documented that the Naxi people and Tibetans in Yunnan province mostly practice matrilocal residence (Corlin 1978). Interestingly, among the twenty-two extended households. Ekvall (1968, 27) argues that this "called-in son-in-law" marriage is to keep family wealth intact, resulting in an extended family. He suggests that it occurs mostly in affluent households. When a family has only one daughter, or when all but one of the daughters have married and left, a son-in-law—usually from a family of less wealth—is brought in as a surrogate son. Clarke (1992) also asserts that matrilocal residence is likely to happen if there is no son in the house of marriage for direct inheritance, or if there is lack of labor in that tent.

Can the above-mentioned hypotheses explain convincingly the situation that occurred in Yid-chab village? According to our data, there existed three types of matrilocal residence. One was the typical family with only one daughter, and there are six cases like this. The second was when there was one daughter and one son in the parental home and the son-in-law married into the family while the son stays too. There were three such marriages. The third occurred in unusual circumstances. The family had three daughters and one son. In 1989, the elder daughter brought in a Magpa, with whom she had two daughters. In 1992, the second daughter married and she also brought in a Magpa to live together with her parents, her sister's family, and her brother. In family C, the parents were middle-aged, and the son was also old enough to work as a full laborer. Thus, the lack of labor force or sons for direct inheritance were not sufficient to explain these two Magpas. When asked about this, the household head simply said: "My two daughters are very filial, and we just cannot bear them

leaving us and moving into other people's houses. Besides, the two daughters are also happy to stay with us after marriage."

Obviously, harmonious family relationships are highly valued in this Magpa-extended household. The head of another Magpa household told me that it was because the son-in-law lived in another village which would take half a day on horse to reach. This made it inconvenient for the daughter to visit her parents frequently. Since the son-in-law has a young brother staying with his natal family, he moved in with her family after marriage. From those two examples, we discovered that the type of family is largely determined by an individual's responses to social and personal circumstances, even though the motivations which drive people to choose matrilocal residence have not been fully understood. However, we only interviewed several Magpa marriages and did not explore them further, although there are still more questions that could be asked, such as, Do Magpa tend to come from a Magpa family? Do the Magpa tend to marry late? Since the sample is small and not enough data is at hand, it is impossible to generalize why the Magpa marriage is commonly practiced although less preferred throughout the Tibetan nomadic areas.

Goldstein, in his study of another Tibetan nomadic community in western Tibet, suggests that there is no rigid rule regarding who marries and moves out. One of Goldstein's respondents said that he decided to keep his daughter with him, and the prospective groom had to move into his household, although he still had two unmarried sons living with him, saying: "She is the best of my children-the one most likely to follow after me well when I am no longer able to work. My son (twenty-year-old) Shibum does not respect me well, and (ten-year-old) Rinchen is too small for me to know how he will turn out" (Goldstein and Beall 1990, 56). Goldstein further points out that, in

reality, nomads decide which of the children should stay with their natal family upon marriage depending on who will take the best care of them as they grow old, rather than by following a fixed "custom." Basically in the village we studied, matrilocal residence occurs no matter whether there are sons or more than one daughter staying with the natal family.

Apart from the fact that the Magpa households are due to decisions made in individual circumstances and by members of the two households-the son's family and the daughter's family-we also suggest that this type of family can be explained by women's domestic roles. Female labor in Tibetan nomadic areas is highly valued. Women's contribution is virtually identical among all Tibetan nomadic areas (see Gelek and Hai 1998). Women do the milking, churning, cooking, collecting dung for fuel, fetching water, taking care of tents, and so forth. Women are not merely valued as child bearers, but also as important members of the labor force, and they make far greater contributions toward the subsistence economy of their society than the men do. This fact is well explained by a saying popular in the Amdo area: "Calluses are on children's feet (herding); calluses are on women's hands (working); calluses are on men's bottoms (sitting and drinking)." This division of labor and the importance of women's labor are also neatly described in one summer schedule of a nomadic household we collected in Yid-chab village:

4:30 the elder daughter gets up, lighting the stove

5:00 the mother gets up, milking their eighteen dir (female yak), then separates the baby sheep from the baby goats

7:00 two elder sons get up, go herding after breakfast; then the elder daughter makes butter while the mother cleans the shrine and does housework

8:00 the father gets up and twists wool thread after breakfast

12:00 the mother prepares lunch. After lunch, the mother and the elder daughter tie the baby yak and milk their dri and the female sheep. Afterward, they return home to make yogurt and cheese

21:00 the son and the younger daughter bring the animals back home. The mother and the elder daughter milk the animals while the younger daughter cooks dinner

21:30 family dinner.

Although this time schedule is not complete, it still reveals the fact that women play an important role in the subsistence economy. Losing female labor means an enormous loss for the family. In order to keep their daughters working for them, some families would rather allow the daughters to bring in their Magpa than have the daughters move away. This might be another factor that favors the existence of Magpa-extended households.

Conclusion and Discussion

In this paper, we have proposed that over the past forty years, the household pattern among three Tibetan communities has experienced considerable change. The average family size increased steadily. While nuclear family households have always been the main pattern, except for a light decrease after the 1980s, extended families increased sharply after the 1980s. During the commune period, both the household size and the number of extended families were lager than during any of the other three historical periods. We attribute the change in household pattern among Tibetan nomadic populations largely to adaptations to governmental reform policies concerning changes in land ownership. The "responsibility system" introduced in the area since the 1980s empowered individual nomads with full rights to livestock, whereas land is held by households as a whole, not by

individuals. This is the basic factor that made this post-reform period special. The joint rights of households to pasture have made the partition of family members difficult to realize due to difficulties in dividing pasture among children. Besides, the economic and management advantages of divided labor can also be introduced of the larger numbers that exist in an extended family.

Studies among nomads in Africa, the Middle East, and central Eurasia show that the extended family is not only common among Tibetan nomads, but is also a prevalent phenomenon cross-culturally. Although pastoral nomads in different regions developed various patterns of social, political, and historical circumstances, they developed similar patterns of household.

Among camel herders such as Bedouin Arabs in Arabia. The extended family is composed of a father or a mother, their sons, wives, and children. One important reason for a larger family then is that Bedouin camel pastoralism requires a high degree of self-sufficiency. The extreme dispersion of camps during many parts of the year means that each tent must be capable of running its head periodically without the aid of neighbors. In such a situation, an extended household based in a single tent is often the smallest possible social unit in which decision making and herding can be effectively organized throughout Central Eurasia (Barfield 1993, 71). Camping groups composed of extended families are common. The description of the Kalmyk pattern was typical of the ideal: after marriage, a son may demand his livestock and move away, but ideally he should remain with his father and brothers. Moving away is a sign of trouble between kin. There is a tendency for extended family herds to be held in common as long as possible (Aberle 1953, 9). Furthermore, Barfield (1993, 102) also notices that the extended household appears to be more common in regions where pastoralism is highly productive, such

as Turkey and the Northern parts of Iran and Afghanistan, where seasonal pastures are dependable. In many cases privately owned, and pastoralists make relative few moves.

It should also be noted that we have mainly discussed the relationship between household patterns and external dynamics, such as the decisive role played by governmental reforms and economic changes. Less attention has been given to the role of the internal dynamic of the family, which is also important. Yan (1997), who has done his fieldwork among a northeast rural community in China, suggests that no matter whether families are nuclear or extended, economic incentives alone are insufficient to explain all changes in family life, and he stresses that conjugal intimacy and privacy in interfamily intrafamily relations as a traditional ideology are equally highly valued throughout the history of Tibetan nomadic areas and also played a role in the formation of the extended family. However, due to lack of data, we have not explored the role that intrafamily relations play among Tibetan nomadic communities in the formation of different household patterns. Future study should thus examine the rules of family formation throughout Tibetan nomadic communities, to answer the question whether the change in family type is due to the resurgence of traditional ideologies, changes in land tenure, or an expansion of economic options.

Notes

1. Among the forty-six households surveyed in Yid-chab village, only one was polyandrous prior to 1959, and it was sororally polyandry with two sisters sharing one husband. There have been no polyandrous and polygynous families since 1959. In a farming community in southwestern Tibet, Levine (1994) found that co-residential families are decreasing. Instead, families of siblings are more

common as a result of radically altered system of land tenure and other economic and legal reforms introduced after 1959. However, there was only one family consisting of siblings in the village we studied, which dissolved after the democratic reform in 1959.

2. For detailed discussion about China's birth control policy, See Judith Banister's *China's Changing Population* (Stanford University Press, 1987).

3. Zhao (1991) noticed that among the rural populations in China's Sichuan province, the average size of specialized households which engage in a single farming activity is larger than that of non-specialized farming households. He therefore attributes this increase to the response toward demands for more workers to carry out diverse economic activities among the specialized farming households. However, this was not the case among the Tibetan nomadic populations.

4. For a detailed discussion of the birth-control policy in Tibet, see Goldstein and Beall (1991, 285-303).

5. See also Levine 1997.

6. This research was a joint project between the China Tibetology Research Center in Beijing and Professor Nancy Levine from the University of California, Los Angeles.

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Protection of Natural Forests and Sustainable Forest Management in the Tibetan Inhabited Areas

Introduction: Presentation of the Issues

1.1. Regarding the protection and construction of ecological environment as the foundation of carrying out the development of the Western regions, the Chinese government has made a significant policy decision to implement the Project of Protecting Natural Forests (hereafter referred to PPNF). As Premier Zhu Rongji of the State Council put it, "The protection of natural forests is a very important move to improve the ecological environment and implement the strategy of sustained development." The first step of this important project is to prohibit all kinds of lumbering of natural forests in the southeast of the Qinghai-Xizang Plateau and the upper reaches of the Yangtze River and the Yellow River, to close hillsides for the care and protection of natural forests, and to close down timber markets because "the Qinghai-Xizang Plateau is the only well preserved region of primeval forests," and the total forest accounts for 9.59% of all the

forest area in China. These primeval forests are mainly distributed over the Tibetan inhabited areas of Ganzi and Aba Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures in the northwest of Sichuan Province, south of Gansu Province, east of Qinghai Province, province Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in the northwest of Yunnan Province, and Linzhi and Changdu in the southeast of Tibet. Therefore, both PPNF and the Project of Sustainable Forestry Development are closely related to the social and economic development of Tibet and other Tibetan inhabited areas, and they will exert a great influence on the pattern of social and economic development and the strategy of sustained development of these areas. But how should the relationship between the prohibition of lumbering and the protection of natural forests and the development of community economy be managed? How should the relationship between the protection of natural forests and sustainable forestry development be handled? How can the win-win goal of protecting natural forests and increasing production and the income of the Tibetan farmers and herdsmen so as to improve their living standards in the forest regions be attained? These questions of environmental protection cannot be evaded and need to be answered promptly.

1. 2. In recent years, after long years of investigation and research many experts and scholars at home and abroad have put forth the concept of sustainable forestry management or sustainable forestry development from the angle of the interdependent relationship between forestry and human survival and development. Sustainable forestry development has become the orientation of forestry development widely accepted in the world and also an important principle of all countries in the world in their forestry policy making. The eleventh Forestry Conference held in 1997 pointed out with special stress that "all kinds of forests not only provide the world's people with important products

and service of social economy and environment but also makes great contributions to ensuring the provision of food, purifying water and air, and protecting soil. One of the keys to the realization of sustained development is sustainable forestry management."

1.3. In 2000, at the invitation of Susan Shen, the person in charge of the Sustainable Forestry Development Program (hereafter referred to as SFDP) of the World Bank, I was honored to conduct an on-the-spot investigation in the two zones of SFDP, namely the Township of Benzhilan, Deqin Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunan Province and the Township of Muonigou, Songpan County, Aba Tibetan Autonomous prefecture, Sichuan Province, and participate in the social evaluation of the program. The purpose of SFDP is to protect and conduct sustainable management of the resources of natural forests and to greatly improve the living standards of the masses of all nationalities in SFDP zones by setting up and carrying out various projects so as to find practical means of protection of biological diversity, the construction of ecological environment and the development of community economy after lumbering of natural forests stop.

2. Choice—Three Patterns of Management

Historically, there exists a close interdependent relationship between forests and the survival and development of the Tibetan people. Because of the different degrees of demand for forests at different periods in history, different patterns of forestry management were formed.

2.1. The pattern of forestry management with people suffering absolute poverty, According to the history book *Accounts of the Tibetan Kings*, the ancestors of Tibetans "six little macaques" were living in a

forest with many fruit trees called Bya-tshongs Forest which means in Tibetan "gathering of many birds." Later "with their hair and tails becoming shorter and shorter", these small monkeys in the forest "could speak and gradually change into human beings. From then they lived on wild millet and clothed themselves in tree leaves." Since then, there exists an indissoluble bond between the survival and development of the Tibetans and forests. By 1950, without any conveniences provided by modern industry, the Tibetans and other nationalities who lived in the forest generation after generation had been accustomed to living off the mountain and its forest. They could do nothing without the forests, such as building houses, keeping warm, lighting and feeding themselves. Forests not only provide them with fertile grassland and farmland but also are the source of food and clothing. Their houses were built with timber, keeping warm and cooking were impossible without firewood and even some of what they ate came from forests (such as all kinds of mushrooms, game in the forest and forest products).

But on the whole, before the 1950's in the Tibetan inhabited areas which were sparsely populated, communication and transportation were inconvenient, the level of urbanization was very low, and commodity economy or market economy was far from developed. Almost separated from the outside world, people there lived a self-sufficient life, which could only meet the lowest requirement for survival and development. Thus, at that time the Tibetans' material demand for forests was only limited to satisfying their self-sufficient, basic demand for consumption, including house-building, fuel and lighting, and so on, which did not do much damage to forests.

But this preservation of natural forests and of ecological environment, with natural forests at its center, was ensured only under

conditions of underdevelopment, low resource use and widespread absolute poverty, including even hunger and cold. If we say that human beings should be regarded as the center and foundation of environmental protection, then it is neither realistic nor desirable to protect forests and environment with people suffering absolute poverty at a time when all the ethnic groups in modern Tibet and other Tibetan inhabited areas are developing market economy and are on the way to modernization.

2.2. From 1950 to 1998, with great attention and support from the central government and all the provinces and the cities directly under the central government, Tibet and other Tibetan inhabited areas sped up their construction of communication networks, cities and towns. Especially after the reform and opening up, with the development of market economy, and forest resources distributed by the market, the demand for timber was increased by a big margin, and forestry was playing a more and more important role in the national economy. In the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's, emphasis was laid on forestry industry, which guaranteed the demand of national defense and local construction for timber. During this period, the enterprises of forestry industry mainly engaged in mandatory lumbering, the transportation and processing of timber from which the residents in the forest region did not benefit much. In 1980's and 1990's, under the circumstances of an open market economy, the forestry industry not only provided large quantities of timber, but it also made great contributions to local financial accumulation. Therefore, governments at different levels attached great importance to it. Forestry industry still occupied the leading position in forestry and developed rapidly. According to statistics, at the end of 1993, in Tibet there were over 4,000 staff and workers in forestry, 8 state-owned enterprises of forestry industry, and 20 run by counties and

townships. The total output value of their industry of Tibet was ¥0.27 billion, accounting for 9.7% of the gross value of industrial and agricultural output, and 7.3% of the gross national product of Tibet. The forestry industry alone earned ¥0.07 billion in profit and taxation, accounting for 40% of Tibet's total industrial revenue in profit and taxation. Even in some Tibetan inhabited areas, it became a big earner of profit and taxation, with 50% to 70% of their revenue coming from the forestry industry which mainly engaged in lumbering, the sale and transportation of timber. After the reform and opening up, motivated and tempted by the short cycle of timber production, the high price of timber, and the huge profit in dealing timber, the state-owned and collective enterprises, and individuals vied with each other for the timber market. At that time, as a result, a structural change took place in the incomes of the Tibetans living in forest regions. A large part of their income came from forest products. For a time, some people had the idea of forestry development that one could become rich by timber. Consequently, it was difficult to change the situation in which lumbering was more important than afforestation, taking than giving and development than protection; furthermore, because of excessive and severe deforestation, the ecological system of forests was greatly damaged. At the same time, because of large amounts of manpower and material resources invested in it and its slow and distant achievement of economic results, afforestation was placed in a less important position. Therefore, its development was very slow and the sustainable forestry management was severely affected. Obviously, such a model of forestry management could achieve some short-term results, but the results were achieved at the cost of the welfare of the following generations. It was not in line with the demand of generational management of resources for sustained development. That is to say, if people of our time exploit the existing

resources in a plunderous way to earn huge profits, it is done at the cost of the developmental conditions and opportunities of the future generations, to say nothing of sustained development. Likewise, if contemporary people persist in pursuing their own economic goal without taking into account the ecological environment of forest, they will lose the base of sustainable forestry management. Therefore, first, such a pattern of forestry management does not accord with environment requirements; second, it is not in accordance with the demand for sustainable forestry development, hence not the best pattern of forestry management.

2.3. The pattern of forestry management integrating economic development and the protection of ecological environment. After 1998, in order to realize the UN's developmental goal of coordinated development of resources, environment and population, and according to the experience and lessons drawn from the eastern coast area's economic development after the reform and opening up, the Chinese government took environmental protection as the first and foremost task in the development of the western regions and made a significant policy decision to prohibit the felling of natural forests in order to protect these forests, policies including stopping farming to grow trees or grass. To ensure the protection of natural forests and sustainable forestry development, in recent years, the Chinese government has increased investment in PPNF and sustainable forestry management in Tibet and other Tibetan inhabited areas and at the same time absorbed large amount foreign funds to invest in PPNF and the Project of Sustainable Forestry Development. This has exerted a great influence on the governments at different levels and the economic life of all nationalities in the Tibetan forest zones. According to my on-the-spot investigation of the Tibetan communities in which PPNF is carried out, the people I interviewed in these places generally approved of and

supported the government's policy of protecting natural forests, welcomed the important Project of Sustainable Forestry Development and took great pleasure in participating in it. Especially the party committees and governments at different levels in the Tibetan inhabited areas lay stress on the national interest and the welfare of the coming generations' came up with all kinds of means and made great efforts to solve the problem of the sharp decease in revenue and farmers and herdsmen's sideline income as a result of the implementation of PPNF. They led the masses in the forest zones to readjust industrial structure and develop new sources of revenue. And in some places they began to extricate themselves from the difficult position of sharp decrease in revenue and the farmers and herdsmen's income and a good developmental momentum began to appear in the integration of economic development with the protection of natural forests.

3. Problems and their countermeasures

It is proved by practice that sustainable forestry management or sustainable forestry development is a comprehensive project or strategy of development which integrates society, economy and ecology. If we really want to ensure the protection of natural forests and promote the coordinated development of social economy, we have to carry heavy responsibilities through thick and thin for there are many contradictions and problems that need to be solved promptly. According to my on-the-spot investigation, the launch of PPNF by the central government and the prohibition of felling natural forests in 1998 have caused the revenue of the governments at different levels and the people's income from forest enterprises and sideline products in forest zones to decrease sharply and exerted some impact on the

local people's building houses, fuel and daily life. Then, how can we solve this contradiction and how to attain the win-win goal of protecting natural forests and developing the social economy of the Tibetans? The following are some countermeasures in light of the results of my investigation.

3.1. The Tibetans in the PPNF zones have a long historical and cultural tradition, and strong religious beliefs. In particular, some influential temples and monasteries are distributed over the natural forest zones in the Tibetan inhabited areas. The traditional Tibetan belief holds that the natural space is a unity of nature, people and gods, three in one. We should say that the practice of protecting forest resources because of this belief is one of the Tibetan cultural traditions. It has many things in common with PPNF, the prohibition of felling natural forests and SFDP which we are now implementing because they will achieve the same results though they proceed from different purposes, orientations, roads and means. In the vast Tibetan inhabited areas I traveled, I found where there were monasteries there were trees and that the Buddhist monks were the most active members in protecting wild life and natural environment. To some extent the implementation of the prohibition of felling natural forests and SFDP happens to coincide with the local Tibetans' traditional and psychological aspiration to protect sacred mountains and wild life. Thus, in the implementation of the project of prohibiting felling natural forests or SFDP, monasteries and their monks should be drawn to participate. Because most Tibetans believe in Tibetan Buddhism, the participation of monasteries and their monks is more beneficial to the smooth and successful implementation of the project of prohibiting felling natural forests, FSDP and other programs of environmental protection.

3.2. Before 1998, the sale and transportation of timber used to

be one of the main sources of the Tibetans' income in the areas I investigated. The policy of prohibiting felling natural forests has inflicted bigger losses on the income of the local Tibetan farmers and herdsmen. It is suggested that relevant plans and measures be devised to compensate them for their losses so as to guarantee that when the natural forests are well protected, the economy of the local minority nationalities will develop, their living standards will greatly improve and the goal of protection and development will be attained. In my on-the-spot investigation, I found that the local people had a strong desire for a program of community development to enable them to eliminate poverty and become rich, and improve their living standards. In their talks, they said that in the past they had felled trees in large quantities to eliminate poverty and get rich and that now they approved of and supported the government's policy of prohibiting felling natural forests, but they would not beg with the gold bowl of natural forests. Therefore, to attain the win-win goal of protecting natural forests and sustainable development, we should first implement the program of community development which enables the Tibetan farmers and herdsmen to get rid of poverty and become rich. To some extent, the elimination of poverty is the foremost condition to achieve sustainable forestry management or sustained development.

3. 3. The prohibition of felling natural forests and the implementation of PPNF cause the broad masses of farmers and herdsmen in the project zones to be faced with four problems, namely fuel shortage, poor lighting and keeping warm by the fire and scarcity of construction materials. The solutions to the four problems are important contents of the basic prerequisite for the sustainable forestry development program. In a like manner, only when the four problems are solved, can the resources of natural forests be effectively protected. For these reasons, I would like to put forward four

suggestions. First, new and alternative fuel for cooking, lighting and keeping warm to firewood should be developed and made use of, such as solar energy, methane and wind power, which should be an important content of FSDP. Second, at the present the experiment with developing and making use of methane is successful in the areas I investigated and local people welcome this new type of energy, but for lack of funds and technology in the popularization of this energy, now only a few households are using it. The electric power available is too insufficient to keep all the people warm and substitute for fuel. For this reason, a plan for the coming fifteen years should be made and carried out that every household can use methane for fuel. The advantages of the project are as follows: 1) it calls for small investments and yields quick returns; 2) it can make full use of local raw material; 3) methane will gradually substitute firewood as a source of energy; 4) it is beneficial to the development of big slaughtering industry; 5) it can solve the problem of lighting. Last, as the Tibetan proverb goes, "when they get rich, farmers build houses well." The house is a symbol of its owner's economic condition. Therefore, the Tibetans like to show off their wealth by building new houses or extending old ones. In recent years, in the areas I investigated, with the improvement of people's living standards an upsurge of building houses is set off, which is consuming large quantities of timber. Therefore, it is necessary to build a model village with substitute building materials rather than timber. This model village will demonstrate to the local Tibetan farmers how to reduce the dependence on timber for building materials. Active efforts should also be made to use substitute fuel and to solve the problem of farmer's needs for wood. These efforts may include the utilization of materials such as stone and cement. 6). In the long run, it is necessary to develop small hydropower stations.

3.4. One of social objectives of forest sustainable operation is to create more employment for local residents and to increase their income. Education is an important premise of employment. However, the residents in the Tibetan forest areas have a high illiteracy rate. For instance, in the Natural Forest Reserve Project area in Deqin of Yunan province, there is a 59.35% illiteracy rate. Among the residents in the natural forest, according to my investigation in three natural villages, those who achieve success and affluence first are farmers and herdsmen who have junior high school diplomas, or have at least studied in the primary school for 5 or 6 years. Therefore, it is suggested that the county middle schools and the township and village primary schools should be used to enhance education with regard to forest sustainable development, making it possible for young Tibetans to reject their dependence for income on the destruction of forests, and make efforts to work on the sustainable operation of forests.

3.5. In the surveyed area, the traditional occupations for Tibetan residents are agriculture, animal husbandry, hunting and wildlife resources collecting. However, the problem is the lack of self-sufficiency of staple food and meat. The state policy of stopping crop raising to return the land for forestry has solved the staple food problem for a large number of residents (the government provides 150 kilograms of staple food for each *mu* of field). However, in areas where this policy is not being carried out, most farmer families only have enough staple food to last 6 months. For the remaining 6 months, they have to buy free-market foods, and the funds for buying such foods mostly come from selling timber and medical herbs, thus creating the vicious circle of the greater the lack of food is, the more foods need to be purchased, and more timber has to be cut or more wildlife resources have to be collected. To reverse this trend, a long-term solution is to develop multiple lines of business, including

develop the third sector business, among the Tibetan farmers and herdsmen to increase their income.

3.6. In a way, family is still the major social and production unit in the project area, and family economy decides the success or failure of sustainable development in the project area in future. Therefore, project investment should view family economic activities as a priority. Efforts should be made to develop family handicrafts production, family textile weaving, family contractor of forest raising, and family tourism, etc. Financial aid should be given to training for the purpose of improving family operation skills and abilities, thus promoting the balanced development of environment and society.

3.7. One of the effective ways of forest sustainable development is to merge protection with development. Currently in the survey region, some Tibetans have the know ledge—how to raise staple food, as well as apples, walnuts, pears and economic forests. The strengths of the economic forest are the short production cycle, high efficiency, ease in seedling raising and forest forming. Also, apart from satisfying local needs, neighboring markets also exist. The problem is that the economic forest produce has inferior appearance, taste and fragrance compared with outside produce, therefore unable to compete in the market. In the long run, a necessary item in the forest sustainable development is to train the local Tibetan farmers and herdsmen to plant, process and sell new economic forestry produce with a higher marketing potential. It is thus suggested that some new projects to build new forests should be carried out, including forest cultivation, forest planting, and the creation of other economic forest bases that can help raise the income of local farmers and herdsmen (for instance fruit base, dry fruit base, rare tree species base, etc.). Wild animal taming may also be developed. These can not only absorb surplus labor, but also solve the problem of income decrease among the locals

because of the stoppage in cutting down natural forests. Efforts should be made to combine forest planting and wealth achieving by eradicating poverty to strike a new path in the Natural Forest Reserve Project and the reasonable utilization of resources.

3.8. The implementation of the policy of stopping raising crops to return the land for forestry and the Natural Forest Reserve Project will gradually reduce employment for traditional farmers and herdsmen in the natural forest reserves, and as a result, there will be the problem of a large population on a small piece of land. So, training in various employment skills should be a priority in project plans. The purpose of these training plans should be to provide 1 or 2 special skills for residents in the community, so that they can transfer to non-agricultural sectors and improve their earning abilities. The training should also give priority to Tibetans, people from other ethnic groups and women. To prepare the trainees for development under a market economy, training plans should be drawn up according to market needs. Consideration should first be given to tourism, processing of local special products, local handicrafts, transportation, as well as the collecting of forest sideline products, and other business skills that are needed by the market. Currently, the Tibetans in the Natural Forest Reserves mostly live in high altitude and cold areas and forest areas. Apart from agriculture and herding, their traditional economic activity includes the collecting of forest sideline products, mostly wild fungi. Therefore, the project should include training plans for the processing and utilization of forest sideline products, plans to establish community service to encompass both production and marketing, so that the development and utilization of forest sideline products will be more scientific, reasonable, thus realizing the sustainable development of natural resources.

3.9. Over the recent years, the state has increasingly

strengthened investments in projects such as Natural Forest Reserve, stopping raising crops to return the land for forestry, stopping raising crops to return the land for grassland, and other forest sustainable development efforts. So, the good management of funds is one of the keys to the success of the projects. According to past experience, strict management and supervision over the procedures of paying out, utilization and regular operation of project funds in different areas, especially the strict control over the actual investment of funds, and follow-up supervision over the operation of project funds are of great importance. Measures should be taken to specify the area of usage, to establish severe discipline over the abuse of project funds, to check at different levels, to connect between different sections and to stop leaks. Representatives of local farmers and herdsmen should be allowed to participate in the management and supervision of the funds to ensure that the largest portion of the funds goes directly into the hands of farmers and herdsmen in the project area. Practice has shown that small-sum credits are effective measures in the management of funds. The key to this is that the ways of credit and their management should be in line with the credit habits of the local residents in the forest area, and should be conducive to the effective utilization of funds. So, it is suggested village level funds management board should be created to manage that a small sum credit. According to my investigation, the village leaders in the project area are mostly democratically elected, having the respect of the local people. So, the village level management board may be made up by the village leader and members (including those from the temples) elected by the residents. Apart from that, loan plans should give priority to ethnic group members and women, and be beneficial to every family. As for the direction of investment, to my understanding, a lack of flowing capital is a severe confinement over the development of third sector

businesses that are conducive to forest sustainable development. It is suggested that more small sum credit in the community should be invested into the construction of small hydropower stations, the development of bio-gas, large plastic shed vegetables, tourism and third sector businesses with local flavors to raise the income of local ethnic group population.

3. 10. In the long run, protection of natural forest inevitably means the transfer of agricultural laborers from single agricultural or planting operation to multi-line operations, township enterprises and small urbanized towns. This is the only possible route to avoid raising crops to return the land for forestry, to protect the ecology, to achieve affluence by eradicating poverty, and to raise living standards. It is also the objective needed to increase the farmers' income through multiple channels. If we cannot change the tradition of the farmers and herdsmen in the forest area to depend on the forest as their livelihood, these farmers and herdsmen can never become better off, and the goal of forest sustainable development cannot be realized. Of course, this will be a gradual process that needs to develop with the market economy and will require long-term effort.

Tibetan Social Development and Culture Changes—Preface

The International Congress of Anthropological and Ethological Sciences (ICAES) is to be held in Kunming, Yunnan Province. To leverage this precious opportunity, China Tibetology Research Center decided to organize a "Forum on Tibetan Society Evolution" during the congress. To our great honor, this proposal has been approved by the Congress sponsor, and I am honored to preside over the forum. As the organizer of the forum, the Institute for Social and Economic Studies, China Tibetology Research Center established an office dedicated for preparing for the forum in last year, whose primary tasks include collection and compilation of papers. Based on six months' efforts, they selected a number of papers in Chinese/English, which were compiled and presented to you as this paper collection. This will be presented as a contribution to the Congress, and will provide a valuable opportunity for academic exchange with ethnologists and anthropologists around the world.

The authors of the papers are scholars at the Institute for Social and Economic Studies. I used to serve as the director of the Institute, and had been learning, exploring, discussing and developing together

with these scholars. In the past two decades, we had the opportunity to travel throughout the seven prefectures/cities of Tibet (Ngari, Shigatse, Lhoka, Lhasa, Nagchu, Chamdo and Nyingchi) and the majority of counties. Therefore, we can say with pride that our team has experienced and witnessed the substantial social changes of Tibet following the Reform and Opening-up. This paper collection is one of the outputs of our anthropological or social anthropological field visits conducted in Tibet for the past years. Although we cannot claim that the papers are of excellent academic quality, we are confident that we are the team that conducted field visits in Tibet with the largest geographic coverage and the most outputs, for the longest period of time. Therefore, we are the most authoritative team in terms of academic study on Tibetan social changes in the world.

Although our studies cover a variety of subjects, to sum up, the studies are designed to understand the past, describe the reality, and predict the future. As the Chinese anthropological researchers who believe in Marxism, we firmly believe that all humans are equal in nature, without any category of high grade or low grade. Due to the fact that people in various ages and different environments acquire different levels of science & technology and production capacity, however, human societies experience different stages of development. This is commonly known as the theory of five social development stages, namely, primitive society, slave society, feudal society, capitalist society and socialist society. Each of these major stages can be broken down into several phases, such as the socialist society can be of primary, medium or advanced level. The Chinese society is currently in the primary phase of socialist society. Likewise, feudal society can be broken down into feudal serf society and feudal landlord society. We hold that, prior to 1959, the traditional Tibetan society is one similar to the European feudal serf society in the Dark Ages. I

understand that the international Tibetology society and the ethnological/anthropological circle have different views/positions in this regard. Nevertheless, China Tibetology Research Center has been studying the subject of the pattern of Tibetan feudal serf society since 1986 as one of the national key study subjects, and published a series of key academic works such as the *Pattern of Tibetan Feudal Serf Society* and the *Herdsmen in Northern Tibet*, etc. Our conclusion based on our long-term, conscientious researches clearly indicates that, prior to the Democratic Reform in 1959, Tibet basically maintained a feudal serf society featuring integration of religion and politics as well as monk/aristocrat dictatorship. In such a traditional political system, the majority of people were subject to enslavement. "While the majority of people are bound by rigorous serf system and cannot be employed by the industrial sector, industrialization will not be possible."[1] Therefore, the Democratic Reform led by the Chinese Communist Party in 1959 was actually a vigorous social transformation campaign, which led to the abolishment of the Tibetan feudal serf society featuring integration of religion and politics, and the establishment of socialist system in Tibet and other Tibetan areas. Serfs who constituted the majority of Tibetan population were freed from dependence upon serf owners, which laid an essential foundation for the socialist industrialization process of Tibet, and represented the beginning of Tibetan modernization.

American politician Samuel P. Huntington ever identified three stages of political modernization, and substituted the single mundane national political power for the discrete, traditional and religious political power of families and races, which was the most fundamental criterion for the transition from a traditional society to a modern one. According to this criterion, in the past traditional political system with integration of religion and politics, the Tibetan political governance

was realized by a group made up of on the basis of kindred, falling within a lower-level social development stage. The democratic reform freed the majority of people from an unfair system in which people were ruled by a small number of people. The freed Tibetans then become their own masters and decided on their own fates. This was an important stage in the process of social development in Tibet, and the first step for the general Tibetans to participate in politics. Particularly, the enormous Party and League organizations and mass groups established gradually after the democratic reform in Tibet opened a path for the public to participate in politics more widely. The accession to the Party and League organizations and various social groups to received training at various levels then became an important way for the common Tibetans to participate in political management. Under the system of People's Congress, the principal heads of governments at all levels were subject to election. Any individual having the right to vote and right to stand for election might enter through election into the government or other social management bodies. The uniform national administrative organizations based on selection and appointment were established down to the township level, and basically superseded the past scattered, traditional political organizations closely related to tribes or families. The composition and selection of members of the new administrative organizations was based on abilities and social achievements of members, rather than on their family backgrounds or blood lineage. Especially after the shift to the direct democratic selection of village and township heads, voters could take seriously the vote in their hands, making those candidates unable to redress the scales fail to be chosen. In fact this revealed the concern of the general people with the fate of their own, the nation, the nationality and the collective, as well as the awakening of their self-consciousness. This social change which was unprecedented in

the history of Tibet brought enormous benefits and interests to the majority of Tibetan people, irrespective of its motivation and process.

China's academic research into anthropology, ethnology and Tibetology maintains their distinct characteristics, that is, to serve the reality and serve the people. In other words, the research is just like literature and art. Both of them involve an issue that who they should serve. China is a unified multi-ethnic socialist country. Therefore, China's research into anthology and Tibetology should serve people of all nationalities; serve China's unity and ethnic solidarity; and serve material and spiritual civilizations of socialism in Tibet and other Tibetan areas. Meanwhile, the research should aim at turning Tibet and other Tibetan regions into a prosperous, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious modern socialist country. That is the research of anthropology or Tibetology with Chinese characteristics. Since China Tibetology Research Center was set up in 1986, it has adhered to these major characteristics. The Center's research focuses on important theoretical and practical issues which have emerged during the modernization drive of Tibet as well as Tibetan regions since the implementation of the Reform and Opening-up policy. During the past 20 years, we completed several Eighth Five-Year key projects of philosophy and social sciences, such as Series on China's Conditions-Economic and Social Surveys of a Hundred Cities (Counties)-Lhasa, Research on Traditional Cultures and Modernization of China's Tibetan Regions and Research on Tibet's Social and Economic Development Strategies, and finished many key tasks concerning subjects including "Research on Development and Environment of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau", "Surveys of a Hundred Tibetan Families", "Anti-poverty in Tibet", "Monographic Study of Scripture-learning and Degree-promotion of Tibetan Buddhist Monks", "Impact of Regional Cost Variance on Tibet's Economic

Development", "Study of Tibetan Buddhism in Line with Socialism", "Study of CPC's Policies on Tibet", "Study of Income Increases for Farmers and Herdsmen and Development of a Moderately Prosperous Society in an All-round Way for Tibet" and "Follow-up Survey of a Hundred Cities' (Counties') Economies and Societies-Lhasa", which all have close bearing on Tibet and other Tibetan regions. From these key tasks and the research papers, it is easy for us to know that Tibet and Tibetan regions are at a unique turning period in history, turning Tibet and Tibetan regions from a traditional society featuring handcraft and agriculture and animal husbandry into a marketized, urbanized and industrialized one. The present situation urges us, Tibetology scholars, to scientifically research into those new issues, situations, phenomena, and take on opportunities and challenges emerging during the process of the reform and opening up as well as marketization. At the same time, we should launch practical consultations in decision making and predictions for economic development of Tibet and Tibetan regions. See to it that our scientific research and studies should encourage and inspire Tibetans, be a spiritual weapon standing for advanced productive forces, advanced cultures and serve the fundamental interests of them. Thus, the research can, on the one hand, serve scientific decision-making of the country, and on the other hand, serve the development of Tibet and relevant areas.

As far as the characteristics of the research concerned, we not only follow the field visit methodology in anthropology, especially in cultural anthropology, but also attach great importance to the basic positions, views and approaches of Marxism-Leninism to understand and analyze the rules of development and change of the politics, society, economy and culture of Tibet and Tibetan regions. So far, there is no other theories that can elaborate the basic development laws of human society objectively, accurately and comprehensively like

Marxism. Although there are many people who are against Marxism, especially after the breakup of the Soviet Union and the upheaval in East Europe, Marxism is still the most charming, powerful and influential theory and thought at present. At the end of the 20th century, the BBC held a big campaign to vote for "Thinkers of the Millennium" through the Internet all over the world. The top of the list is no others but Marx. There were thousands of thinkers in the past, but why Marx surpasses others? This is because the basic theories of Marxism are proved to be scientifically systematic and true through practices. Marxism adopts scientific theories to reveal the objective developmental laws of the society and points out the correct direction for the advancement of human and the society. That is why a Marxist anthropologist or a Tibetologist should apply the basic theories of Marxism to explaining social issues and phenomena emerging in the past, at present and in the future.

Our researches and papers may focus on the strategies for development of Tibet's economy and society at large or on social changes of a small village. However, one of the focal points is always farmers and herdsmen who account for 80% of the total population. Since the focal point and challenges for Tibet's modernization lie in rural pasturing regions, whether the socialist modernization of Tibet can be successful or not depends on the modernization drive of the rural pasturing regions. If there is no stability and development for the rural pasturing regions, nor there will be in the whole Tibetan region; if there is no moderately prosperity for the rural pasturing regions, nor there will be for Tibet. In short, if there is no modernization for the rural pasturing regions hosting 80% of the population, nor there will be for Tibet. The issue is not only the most fundamental and important issue during the modernization drive of Tibet, but also a major issue which is vital to the overall situation of economic development,

prosperity and modernization of Tibet. Thus, we may give our attention to the satisfactory achievement of the GDP of Tibet (an average annual increase by 12.7%), but also regard as the top priority recently the construction of new socialist villages which focuses on good living standards and working conditions for rural people. How can Tibet, a region distinct in geography, history, religion, culture and politics, develop quickly in fierce market competitions at china and abroad, gradually bridge the gap with other well-off Chinese mainland areas and soon achieve the strategic goals of socialist modernization? According to our research, with an all-around shift in human development visions in the 21th century, Tibet should take the path to socialist modernization which is beneficial to the vast farmers and herdsmen, and focus on diversifying and differentiating its economic sectors and achieving high employment rate.

PART 3

Anthropology Field Work

Anthropological Field Survey on Basic Education Development in the Eastern Tibet Nomadic Community

Introduction

Since the Great Western Development Strategy of China began in 2000, the central and local governments are giving a great deal of attention to pushing the development and improvement of basic education, which it regards as having a high profile and important role in modernization, in particular at the local level. As a result, The Central government of China has increased investment in education in the ethnic minority areas of western China. For instance, in June 2002, the Chinese Ministry of Education began implementing a project called "The Development of Basic Education in Western China". It has lent a total of over US $10 million at low interest rates to five western province-level units, namely Yunnan, Sichuan, Guangxi, Ningxia and Gansu, in order to support basic education in these ethnic minority areas.

The project area covers 98 counties in the five province-level units, including two where Tibetan culture predominates. They are Kangding(Dar Tse Do) County in Sichuan and Maqu County in

Gansu. The purpose of the project is to improve the quality of basic education and to enable students to complete it. The target group is those children who live in minority areas where economic condition are poor. The project gives priority to those in the ethnic minority communities lacking the opportunity to go to school. I was honored enough to be invited to take part in the project and to act as a consultant for it.

From 18 February to 18 March 2003, I had the opportunity to undertake anthropological fieldwork in Kangding County in the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province; and Weixi County in Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, and Maqu County in Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province. My aim was to carry out a survey and social assessment of basic education among the Tibetan areas.

During the fieldwork I held discussions with officials at different levels, including prefecture, county and township, as well as with village leaders. We also visited middle and primary schools in the counties and townships and three Tibetan villages in two townships. We interviewed teachers, students, and herders, as well as children who had not enrolled in school or had dropped out. We also talked in different places to teachers and pupils, both Tibetan and Han, and we visited Tibetan villages and interviewed herders' households. By employing both qualitative and quantitative methods, we were able to collect first-hand data and make use of prefecture, county and township documents and statistics. This paper represents a report on this data, and an analysis of the main factors affecting the development of basic education among the nomadic Tibetans (drol pa).

It is clear that modern education has been developing rapidly in Tibetan cultural regions over the past half-century, and especially

since the reform period began in the early 1980s. Education has developed there from almost nothing into a comprehensive structure that goes from primary school, junior high school, senior high school and university; the system has improved from private to public, from informal to formal schooling. Furthermore, the number of high schools (both junior and senior) has increased from virtually zero to 2, 537 between 1951 and 1990 in TAR. This means that an average of about 60 such schools were set up each year. And, in 1990 the number of students in school was 178, 700; which is 60 times more than in 1951 in TAR. Also, there are students who have joined the School for Tibetan Students in Inland China. By 1990 the number of students in school in the TAR was about 80 per cent of the total school-age population in the TAR.

However, if you compare the basic education development level of TAR with other province of China, the students drop-out rate still remains too high, not only in Maqu and Kangding county, but also in other Tibetan areas like Sichuan, Qinghai, Yunnan and the TAR. Some of the main reasons we found for this phenomenon during our fieldwork included: the demand for child labour and the distance between homes and schools in the Tibetan nomadic areas. The attitude of parents towards basic education also has a significant impact on their children's enrollment rates. Different localities have experienced varying degrees of economic development, which also impacts basic education.

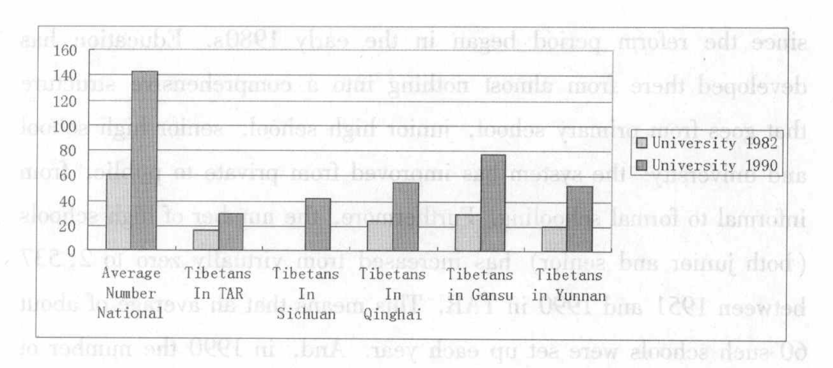


Figure 1. The Number of University Students per 10,000 Tibetans

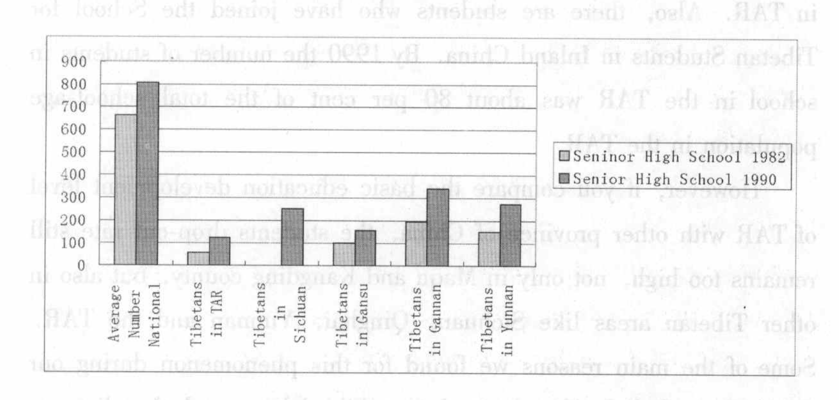


Figure 2. The Number of Senior High School Students per 10,000 Tibetans

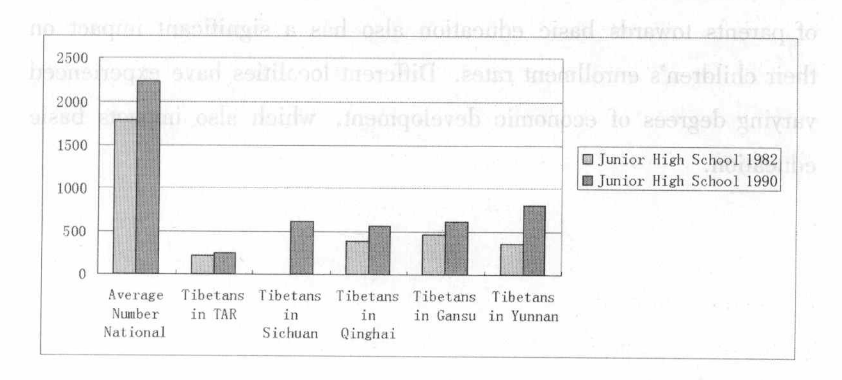


Figure 3. The Number of Junior High Students per 10,000 Tibetans

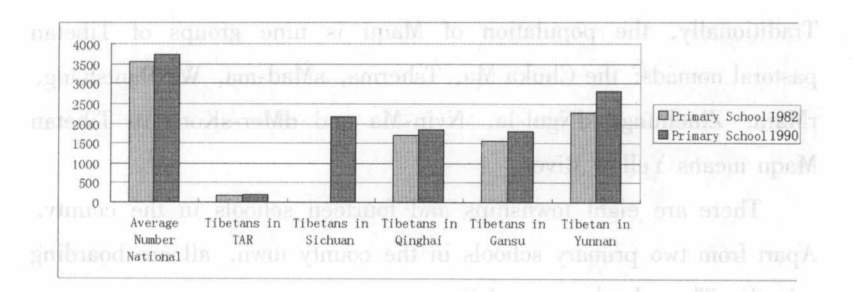


Figure 4. The Number of Primary School Students per 10,000 Tibetans

Dr. Liu Zhiyang and I held discussions with officials at different levels, including prefecture, county and township, as well as with village leaders. We also visited middle and primary schools in the counties and townships and three Tibetan villages in two townships. We interviewed teachers, students, and herders, as well as children who had not enrolled in school or dropped out. We also talked in different places to teachers and pupils, both Tibetan and Han, and we visited Tibetan villages and interviewed herders' households. By employing both qualitative and quantitative methods, we were able to collect first-hand data and make use of prefectural, county and township documents and statistics. This paper represents a report on this data, and an analysis of the main factors affecting the development of basic education among the Tibetans.

Main Findings on Basic Education in Maqu County

Maqu is located in the southwest of Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu Province, just near the borders with Qinghai and Sichuan. Maqu has a population of 38, 350, of whom 35, 685 are Tibetans, most of them making their living through animal husbandry.

Traditionally, the population of Maqu is nine groups of Tibetan pastoral nomads: the Chuka Ma, Tsherma, sMad-ma, Wa Bantshang, rMara, Zhichung, dNgul-la, Nyin-Ma and dMer-sKor. In Tibetan Maqu means Yellow River.

There are eight townships and fourteen schools in the county. Apart from two primary schools in the county town, all are boarding schools. The schools are as follows:

One complete primary boarding school in each township, with one township primary school located in the county town.

Two primary schools in two very remote villages of two townships.

One complete primary school for Tibetan and other nationalities in the county town.

Two complete middle schools, one for Tibetans only and the other for both Tibetans and other nationalities in the county town.

One nursery school in the county town.

There are two kinds of boarding school in all Tibetan areas. The first is called *sanbao*, which means "three responsibilities". The government provides food and accommodation, textbooks and free tuition. This policy has been implemented in the TAR since 1985, in order to ensure nine-year compulsory education. In the second kind of boarding school, the government provides only accommodation and free tuition. This kind is found in the Tibetan areas of Yunnan, Sichuan, Gansu and Qinghai, including Maqu County. All schools in the TAR and the four provinces listed use a Tibetan-language textbook, which was produced in 1992 and has not been revised since.

Since the Great Western Development Strategy began in 2000, the central and local governments of China have paid more attention to basic education in Tibetan areas. The Maqu County government has taken various measures to improve basic education in recent years and

put forward specific basic education policies. These include giving a far higher priority to schools in general, including boarding schools, public schools, full-time schools and schools in which instruction is in Tibetan.

As a result of these policies, the enrollment rate has risen significantly, while the drop-out rate has seen a comparable decrease, not only in Maqu, but also in other Tibet areas like Sichuan, Qinghai, Yunnan and the TAR.

Table 1 Number of students from 1999 to 2003 in Oula township primary school (T = total, M = male, F = female)

Grade	1999			2000			2001			2002			2003		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
1	45	31	14	58	39	19	70	40	30	79	41	38	70	37	33
2	14	8	6	12	9	3	34	18	16	52	30	22	47	29	18
3	9	5	4	12	7	5	14	11	3	18	12	6	25	15	10
4	3	1	2	10	5	5	12	7	5	13	10	3	12	9	3
5	2	0	2	2	0	2	9	4	5	9	5	4	9	5	4
6	3	3	0	2	0	2	2	0	2	8	4	4	8	4	4
T	76	48	28	98	60	38	141	80	61	179	102	77	171	99	72

Main Factors Affecting the Drop-out Rate

Despite the fall, the drop-out rate remains high, as can be seen in Table 1 and the chart. Though the number of girls is lower than of boys, the drop-out rate is lower for girls.

There are a number of reasons why children drop out from school. The following are some of the main ones.

Demand for child labour. Grazing is one kind of labour suitable for children. The introduction of the household pasture contract system in Maqu in the early 1980s not only changed the production mode but

also the herders' way of life in the area. Every household contracted two patches of the grasslands (one for winter and one for summer). Herders settled near the winter grasslands during the winter and during the summer lived in tents near the summer grassland. The location of the households is scattered and they have to divide labour among the family members to take care of their cows and sheep, as well as take on sideline forms of household production, such as collecting *Yartsa Gunbun* (insect herb)[①], doing manual work in the county town or undertaking other business. On the other hand, there is a customary division of labour in Tibetan herders' areas. Women perform about 60 per cent of work in the pastoral areas, which affects the rate of girls' access to schooling.

Parental attitudes to basic education. The attitude of parents to basic education has a significant impact on their children's enrollment rates. There are many factors affecting parental attitudes to basic education. Firstly, most parents demand a return on their investment in their children's basic education. They expect that those children who go to school will get a good job. If this does not happen, parents are likely to lose interest in sending their children to school. When we asked students' parents: what kind of occupation or job would your children like to take up when they graduate from school? most answered that they would like their children to become officials or doctors. This view comes from the period of the planned economy, when the government expected that minority students who went to university, secondary specialized school or secondary technical school would have the guarantee of a permanent job. This system was called the "iron rice bowl". At that time, most Tibetan students got

① This is a very expensive kind of herbal medicine, which turns into insects in winter and changes into grass in summer.

employment as officials (cadres). However, now that the "iron rice bowl" has been broken, there is no total guarantee that all students will get a job after graduation from university. There is a job market, in which talented people are likely to do much better than others. With this result, parents are less likely to want to send their children to school.

Distance from school. This is a major factor affecting children's access to basic education. Maqu County is about 10, 190 square kilometers in area. In 1990 there were only about three persons per square kilometer. Also, there is only one primary school per township and one Tibetan-language secondary school in the county. For many students the nearest primary school is more than 50 kilometres away from their home and for some students, such as those of Muxihe Township, the secondary school is more than 130 kilometres away from home. This distance factor is one of the reasons why boarding schools are set up in the Tibetan nomad areas. Many children are still at primary school at fourteen or fifteen years of age, which makes them feel inferior and at a disadvantage. The main reason for this late education is that the school is too far away from home and the living conditions there are inadequate.

Conditions in the students' dormitories. In the townships, all primary schools are boarding schools. Children have to live at school because their homes are so far away. But in many of these schools, such as the Tibetan-language Secondary School in Maqu County, living conditions are inadequate. Because more and more children go on to higher grades in school, the government has allocated more funds to cope with the increasing demand for accommodation at the schools, but it is still grossly inadequate. Many parents even rent a house and live close to the school, in order to be able to look after their children while they are at school.

Teaching materials. The only textbook used was produced specially for the Tibetan communities in the TAR and four provinces. But it is actually mostly a translation from Chinese, and the context is inappropriate to the culture and way of life of Tibetan herders. Most teachers we interviewed told us that they lacked teaching materials such as suitable books, television and video equipment and programmes, and so on. For instance, children have never seen traffic lights before and do not know what they are. This makes many students lose interest in studying.

The impact of economic development. Different localities have experienced varying degrees of economic development, which impacts basic education. For instance, in Guzha in the Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, there are 384 Tibetans and 75 Han. This village is located on the main Sichuan-Tibet highway, as a result of which trade has developed rapidly there. Most of the villagers run stores, and 60 per cent of families own trucks and phones. The average annual income per person is RMB 2,000. Some families even make over RMB 10,000 per year. The result is that they are very keen to send their children to school, and the percentage of school enrollment in primary and secondary school is 100 per cent.

Conclusion

Since the Great Western Development Strategy of China began in 2000, the central and local governments of China have paid more attention to basic education and taken various measures to improve it in the Tibetan areas. As a result, basic education in the Tibetan cultural areas has developed rapidly in recent years. Although the drop-out rate has fallen, it still remains too high, not only in Maqu, but also in other Tibetan areas in Sichuan, Qinghai, Yunnan and the

TAR. Some of the main reasons we found for this phenomenon during our fieldwork included: the demand for child labour and the distance between homes and schools in the Tibetan nomadic areas. The attitude of parents towards basic education also has a significant impact on their children's enrollment rates. Different localities have experienced varying degrees of economic development, which also impacts basic education.

The Herders of Eastern Tibet: Notes from an Anthropological Field Study

Going west from Chengdu, crossing the famous Mount Erlang, and passing through the much-sung-about township of Kangding, the trip to the Sethar grasslands extends almost a thousand kilometers. After driving along the Sichuan-Tibet Highway westward to Grag-go county town, we suddenly turned northward, away from the highway. Coming to the little town of Ser-ba, we drove about forty to fifty kilometers westward, and then along a narrow gorge. The cliffs on both sides of the highway rose up to the clouds and, raising our eyes, we could only see a narrow strip of sky, winding ahead like a ceremonial scarf. This stretch of highway had been carved out of solid rook, and our car's horn evoked long echoes in the ravine. The crests and sides of the mountains were over grown with lush forests in which one often caught sight of such animals as river deer and monkeys in past years. I had seen bands of monkeys playing at the foot of the mountains when I came here for the first time in 1969. This place is the only passageway into Sethar, and even today it looks dangerously precipitous. Although the Sethar grassland itself is broad and smooth, it is surrounded with undulating mountain ranges and a maze of steep

gorges. The Ser-chu River and Ser-la Mountains toward the northwest and southeast of grassland form a continuous line that separates Sethar from the rNga-Ba Tibetan Region in Qinghai and Sichuan, and to the southwest the Da-Chu River and Mount Da-Duo separate Sethar from Ganzi and Grag-go counties. The only access to Sethar is the long and narrow passage along the winding Ser-chu River.

After driving for more than ten kilometers through this passage, we gradually saw fewer trees. Now and then, there was a solitary pine or some scrub on the mountain slopes that slowly gave way to a flat stretch of grassland. Most of the mountains beside the roadway had been weathered and eroded by nature and now formed grassy hills with gentle slopes and round summits that looked like mountains from a distance but were laced with valleys, both easy to climb and suitable for grazing cattle. This is a rich and beautiful place.

In 1969, after I graduated from the Southwest Nationalities Institute, I had a perilous adventure the first time I came to Sethar. It was during the factional fighting of the Cultural Revolution, and communications were most inconvenient, but I was in a hurry to get to my work unit. I got to Grag-go, accompanied by a fellow townsman from Ganzi whom my elder sister had found. From Grag-go to Sethar there was still a distance of 178 kilometers. We waited several days in Grag-go without finding any motor vehicles going to Sethar. We were told that only one bus made the trip from Grag-go to Sethar every week, which took two days, and the bus frequently missed its schedule. So we decided that the only hope was to hitch a ride. As we were wandering around aimlessly in Grag-go's suburbs, we caught sight of a truck with the legend "Wengda Forestry Bureau" painted on it standing in a vegetable plot. My companion told me that Wengda was a township in Sethar and we would be quite close to our destination if we got a lift there. So we accosted the driver and asked

him if he would give us a ride. As those were the years of the planned economy, coupons were needed for everything one bought. Cloth coupons were in great demand, and we happened to have quite a number of these. The driver accepted some coupons, then pointed to the truck bed which was piled high with cabbages and said, "Take a look. Do you think you can ride on top of those?" The cresting heap of cabbages did not furnish a safe or stable place to sit, and traveling on mountain roads under such circumstances was indeed quite dangerous. But we were unwilling to wait any longer, so we decided to risk it, and got on the truck.

The truck left the Sichuan-Tibet Highway at Grag-go and drove northward along a ravine. Less than twenty miles out, it began to climb into mountains. Driving on the steep slopes and winding road, the truck wheezed and groaned like an old man as it inched forward. We were rocked right and left and felt we might fall off at any moment. In desperation, we kicked some cabbages off the truck bed to make a small niche that would provide us with a more stable place to sit. After about seventy kilometers of such arduous journeying, we finally made it to a place called Ser-ba. Ser-ba, or Ser-wa, means gold digger in Tibetan. Documentation shows that alluvial gold was indeed produced here as recently as during the time of nationalist government, The distance from here to Sethar county town is about eighty kilometers. The elevation is only some three thousand meters, the climate is mild, and there are abundant forestry resources, which is why a state forestry bureau had been set up here. Whole stretches of trees were being cut down-like shaving heads-and cast into the Ser-chu River, and from there they floated further down the Dadu River.

This is a semi-agricultural, semipastoral region. At first, it did not belong to Sethar county but formed part of the territories governed by Zhou-si-jia, the famous headman of Aba prefecture and one of the

eighteen headmen in the[former] Sichuan-Xikang border region. It was probably combined into Sethar county in 1967. There had manifestly been frequent armed conflicts here in the past. The villages were all built on mountain tops, some as far as twenty or thirty kilometers from the highway and riverbank. Life was hard for the residents, some of whom had to negotiate as many as ten or more kilometers of mountain paths to get water. The villagers' houses were mostly square in shape, and the first story was very high; most had no windows. If there were windows, they were very small, like loopholes of firing guns. The second and third stories were more spacious and jutted out over the first, producing a sense of top-heaviness. After qingke and peas were harvested, they were dried on the roof. Such a structure was of course easy to defend against attackers in times of fighting. From today's viewpoint, however, house like these are both uncomfortable and inconvenient.

In Ser-ba we waited a few more days for transportation, and eventually the once-a-week mail truck passed through. I managed to wangle a lift to Sethar from the driver of the mail truck, but just before we climbed in, the driver noticed that my companion was dressed in Tibetan garb and had a foot-long Tibetan dagger stuck in his belt. After that he simply refused to take us, no matter how hard I tried to explain. In those chaotic days of interfactional fighting during the Cultural Revolution. It was not difficult to understand the driver's attitude. I had my companion change immediately into some of my Han clothes.

After another day's wait, we managed to stop an army vehicle. It was the car of the then revolutionary committee director and militia commander of Sethar county. I took out my letter of introduction and showed it to this gray-haired, kind-looking elder, beginning to tell him about my problems. Before I had finished he interrupted me,

saying, "Yes, I know. A letter came before you did. Get in!" After that, I came and went countless times on this stretch of road!

A Survey Team Made Up People of Different Nationalities and Ethnic Groups

In 1994, I arrived once more to conduct a survey in Sethar, this time with a team consisting of six people. One was Professor Nancy Levine from the Department of Anthropology of the University of California at Los Angeles. She is Jewish and had begun to study Tibetan and work for a doctorate at the London School of Oriental and African Studies. She is profoundly interested in Tibetan culture, especially the culture of the nomads. To better study Tibet, she once went to Switzerland where she formally took a lama as her teacher and for three years learned the Tibetan language. When she completed her doctoral thesis, she went many times to an impoverished Tibetan district in Nepal and stayed there for long periods of time. Like the local people, she once lived in a crude cave. She took a Tibetan godmother and helped the latter send her two children to college. She is both an upright and honest scholar as well as a strict teacher. The first time I worked with Nancy on a study topic was at Ngari, Tibet, in 1990. This time in Sethar was the second time we worked together. My work unit provided Nancy with an interpreter called Hai Miao. Young and pretty, she was a Hui, spoke English very well, was very much interested in anthropology, and had decided to use this opportunity to learn the field investigation methods of anthropology. She, however, was quite timid. Dogs frightened her, and when she fell off her horse she wanted to cry but did not so. The first night we spent in Wang-zha village in Serthar's pastoral region, there was a heavy rainstorm with thunder and lightning. Sleeping alone in a little

tent, Hai Miao was so frightened she began to wail. And there were many times she had tears in her eyes because she was afraid or anxious. She herself said that she had never in her life come across so many a scary things. The lovable thing about her was that she cried or laughed whenever she felt like it, and everyone liked her for her ingenuous, lively, and unrestrained personality. Today she is studying for a doctorate in anthropology on the other side of the Pacific Ocean, and I wonder if she still cries when faced with such circumstances. Among our colleagues was also Dawa Tsgering, whom one might call my student. He majored in the Tibetan language as an undergraduate, did not speak *putonghua* very well, and had difficulty writing in the Han language. A native of Yushu, he was bronzed and stalwart like a typical Khampa. He had a good voice and sang wherever he want; his singing was soon to be heard throughout the Sethar grassland. Enamored with anthropology, he made rapid progress and is today studying for a doctorate in Hong Kong. To the four of us were added two locals. One was Gawa, who had once served here as director of the county Bureau of Animal Husbandry and is now at the Beijing Superior Academy of Tibetan Buddhism. The other was Qiu Lang, a well-known reporter in Sethar. He was very stylishly garbed in cowboy denims and, with two or three cameras slung across his shoulders, had very much the air of a famous correspondent.

Our survey team went to three places: first, Sho-ro village, which stood closest to the highway and to the county town. Formerly, it had been the winter settlement of the Sho-ro tribe. However, the highway had not reached this place in the summer we went there, and the trip was very difficult as we had to negotiate many marshes. We rented an East Wind model automobile and explored the path as we went. Sometimes, to avoid getting stuck in s swamp, we had to take a roundabout path and drive along a mountain slope with the car's body

so titled that it seemed about to overturn at any moment. It was terrifying. At times, as we drove down a bumpy road, we seemed to be sitting on springs and were thrown high up as the car jolted along. On such roads we had to stop and rest after advancing only a few kilometers because the two women could not stand such tossing and were throwing up uncontrollably. Even I felt that my innards were being shaken out of me. It took us a whole day to complete the trip of a few dozen kilometers. On the return trip we decided to ride horses, but we had not taken into account the fickleness of the weather on the grasslands. There was not a speck of cloud in the sky when we set out in the morning, but by noon, when we stopped on the way for a picnic, black clouds gathered, and soon the rain came down in buckets, leaving us looking like drenched chickens.

Second was Chukor village, some five or six kilometers from the county town. This used to be the location of a large tribe, and was now a production brigade. Its winter pasture lay only 4.5 kilometers from the county town, and communications were quite convenient as most of the villager's tents and permanent houses were disposed along the highway. In the 1970s, when I was working in Sethar, I had lived here for a year and was very familiar with the herders.

And last came Wang-zha village of Kang-le township, which we reached by driving westward from the county town for twenty to thirty kilometers and then riding half a day on horseback. No foreigners had ever come here. Although a road had been laid from the county town to Kand-le township, it was a dirt road that had not been surfaced with cement, and was not classifiable even as the lowest grade of highway. Motor vehicles driving on its muddy surface would often slide snakelike, right and left. We reached Kang-le township just as the yearly horse races were concluding. Everywhere there were crowds of people, and we could not find a place to stop over. Eventually the

township government provided us with a tent. We had to make with it for the night, men and women all squeezed in together. The next day, we transferred all our daily necessities-tents, clothing, provisions, stoves, and pots and pans-onto the backs of ten yak, then set out along a ravine, each of us riding a horse. The annoying thing was that every time our horses went a bit faster, the two women would start shouting from behind, and we would have to rein in and slow down.

When we reached Wang-zha village, we first erected a big tent among a mushroom-like cluster of black yak-hair tents. This was for us menfolk. Then we put up two smaller tents: one was a tent Nancy had brought from the United Stated, and the other was a traveling tent we had acquired in Beijing. The quality of these tents was so-so. But their original style attracted a great many herders. They wondered how these tents could be put up without using a single pole or rope. So every day, a group of them came to inspect the tent. Nancy at first felt uncomfortable about this, but later calmed down. A dozen or more herders would stand outside her tent, looking in at this yellow-haired, blue-eyed foreigner and her strange American tent, while Nancy sat inside, looking out at the attire of the herders and their speech and behavior. So it was that people from two ends of the globe came together. driven by the same force.

In the past, the ancient nomads of Sethar led a self-sufficient way of life, wearing self-made garments made of animal pelts, living in tents woven of yak hair, and burning yak dung for fuel. Today the herders have radios and tape recorders that constantly bring abundant facts about everyday life and popular music and songs to all corners of the pastoral regions. They long for modernization, and herein lies a contradiction. People in the West who are already modernized want the herders to stay far away from modern civilization and retain their ancient traditions, whereas the herders of Sethar, like the great

majority of Tibetan herders, are more interested in all things modern and are advancing, amid some unaccustomed birth pangs, toward modern civilization.

However, Nancy, this professor from a country that has advanced most rapidly toward modernization, kept wanting to return to the traditional life pattern of the Sethar grassland. Her dream was to buy a herd of yak here after she retires, seek an industrious and kind herdsman who does not smoke or drink wine to be her helpmate, leave behind the confines of high-rise buildings, the interference of flashing neon lights, and the noise and clamor of big cities, abandon the powerful urges of competition, let nature take its course, and live out the rest of her years in peace and tranquility.

Of course, her dream was not mere wind from an empty cave. Although the herders' thoughts and concepts have changed considerably under the influence of the market economy, the traditions of thousands of years still possess a stubborn vitality. We did not stay very long at Wang-zha village, but no matter which household we visited, we felt as though we were going home. The herders brought us milk and yogurt, and we gave them vegetables and canned food. Every evening, we sat around an oil lamp in the big tent, sometimes chatting and telling stories, sometimes learning English songs or Tibetan songs, but always feeling most happy. In this warm environment, Nancy was like a fish in water and would not have caught cold even if she had fallen in an icy river. Did she really belong to this stretch of land?

I was born on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and, as a descendant of Tibetan herdsmen, grew up together with sheep and yak. When I graduated from junior middle school in 1969, I took exams and entered the Southwest Nationalities Institute in Chengdu. After graduating in 1969, I was allocated work in the Sethar pastoral region

and worked there for approximately ten years (1969-1978). During these ten years, I often lived in the same tents as the Sethar herders and we established a deep reciprocal affection. Many elderly herders showed concern for me as though I were their own son. To this day I cannot forget how I helped them move from pasture to pasture amid wind and snow, went with them to resolve disputes about pastures, and discussed and studied production plans as well as issues related to year-end distribution by the production brigades. In the daytime I learned from the herders such production skills as livestock tending and churning butter, and at night lay with elderly herders on the grass and listened as they related the many traditions and stories concerning the Washul Sethar tribe. When we went to the county town, I would help them with their shopping, inform the authorities about their wishes and desires, and help them appeal injustices. However, I did not think of writing anything about them at the time, although I regularly kept a diary in which I noted down various things about the Sethar herders' culture and life.

In 1978, I took exams and was admitted to the postgraduate institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. My teacher, Li Youyi (a well known Chinese anthropologist and ethnologist who has now settled down in the United States), encouraged me to conduct anthropological analyses and research as I studied there. Toward this end, he spent half a semester lecturing on the topic of nomadic culture. Since then I have devoted myself to research in this area and have amassed a great deal of material. I returned on this basis to the Sethar grassland at the end of 1980 to carry out deeper fieldwork, and conducted several months of focused on-the-spot investigations and research into this nomadic society with which I was already quite familiar. Everyone there, from the leadership of the county committee and county government to the herders themselves, provided me with

all sorts of conveniences, so that my investigations were successfully concluded within a short time. These investigations gave me a basic understanding of the social circumstances and cultural characteristics of the Sethar pastoral region. Surveys conducted in 1985 and 1994 further deepened my comprehension of the Sethar herders' social life.

Sethar, also known as Wa-Shul-Ser-Thar (Washul Sethar), is now an animal-husbandry county, self-governed by the Tibetans of Sichuan's Ganzi. There are three pastoral districts and one agricultoral district in this county. The studies in this article cover the three pastoral districts. The agricultural district was placed under the jurisdiction of Sethar county after 1950 and did not belong to the traditional Washul Sethar region. Since the Sethar pastoral districts were for many years subjected to blockade before 1950 and were located in a remote, inaccessible region, the herders retained many ancient customs as well as methods of pastoral production and forms of organization that held vestiges from primeval times. All these were materials foreign researchers and adventurers had coveted over the years but were unable to access. Foreign explorers had set foot practically everywhere on the Xikang-Tibet Plateau, but had never been able to enter the Sethar grassland. Robert B. Ekvall, the American anthropologist, might be called the U. S. authority on Tibetan nomadic society, and he lived as long as eight years in the Tibetan pastoral regions, but he never went to the Sethar grassland. In China, traveling to the Sethar grassland was extremely difficult before Liberation. Several thousand li of it were uninhabited and travelers had to bring their own accommodations, clothing, and provisions. Added to this was the fact that rulers throughout history had referred to Sethar as being "beyond the pale," and called the Sethar herders "wild foreign tribes" and "wild men." For these reasons, very few people dared to enter this area, and articles and writings about

Sethar's nomadic society were rare. Very few outsiders know about its circumstances. Also, no government had ever been set up in the Sethar pastoral region before 1950, so there were no county annals available for examination. No documentation about Sethar's society and history were to be found, other than a title-conferring piece of the paper in a headman's tent, given to the latter by Zhao Erfeng of Qing dynasty. Although a few writings from the Nationalist era concerning Xikang issues contained occasional references to the circumstances of the Sethar grassland, these were no more than descriptions of some of the topographical characteristics and the flora and fauna of that area. In the 1930s, two French explorers hired a bodyguard, disguised themselves as lamas, and entered the grassland risking their lives. They came into conflict with the local herders and one was killed while the other fled in panic. After returning to France, the survivor wrote a book entitled Tibetan Venture, which said very little about local customs. It contained mainly stories of his experiences and vivid descriptions of battle scenes. Probably only those Westerners who read this book had any idea what Sethar was like, and apart from a small amount of literature accumulated after 1950, practically no one had conducted any earnest investigation or scientific research into the material life, spiritual culture, economic structure, or social organization of the herders themselves. It is for this reason that our current investigation and research into this place were so important. How had an alliance of Tibetan nomadic tribes that had lived behind closed doors and in virtual isolation from the world for eight generations managed to survive? And how had they passed over to a market economy after 1950? There were the questions that intrigued us.

Where Is Sethar?

The Sethar grassland is situated at the juncture of Sichuan and Qinghai provinces at 98°48′to 101°02′east longitude and 31°38′to 33°20′ north latitude. It extends eastward to Mount Rewu and Rangtang of the Aba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture; southward to Xiqing Monastery, Mount Laoze, and Luhuo; westward to the Daqu River and Ganzi and Shiqu counties; and northward to Qinghai's Guoluo prefecture, forming a long and narrow grassland stretching from a northwesterly to a southeasterly direction and covering an area of about 11,500 square kilometers. Some 27,784 people live on this grassland, which is an area where Tibetan nomads live in compact communities. The Sethar grassland lies on the border of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, and is part of the Tanggula Fold Belt rose up during the orogenic movements of the Tertiary and Quaternary periods. The terrain is high clines gradually from the northwest down toward the southeast. Apart from a small area in the south that consists of a relatively fractured mountain district, all of the rest is a high plateau. The plateau accounts for 84 rercent of the region's overall area, mountains and hills 15 percent, and flatlands 1 percent, Most of the terrain is at an altitude of between 4,000 and 4,900 meters. Despite the height of the terrain, the entire grassland is broad and smooth with gentle undulations. On it are distributed a good many hills and grassy knolls with a relative height of from 90 to 400 or 500 meters. Two of the largest mountains——Mount Sethar and Mount Da-duo——are like the two legs of the Bayangela Mountains and extend from northwest to southwest across the entire grassland. All the large and small mountains in this area are residual ranges of the Bayangela Mountains, and most of them have been eroded over time by the forces

of nature to become grassy hills with gentle slopes and rounded summits that like mountains from the distance but more like valleys from nearby. They are easy to climb, and are well suited for grazing. The four main rivers within the grassland are the Do-khug, Ser-chu, Da-chu, and Nyi-chu. The Nyi-chu, which has its source at Nyi-cuo-ka-mu-do, flows through the middle of the grassland of 202 kilometers long in the grassland. The Ser-chu River, also called the Sethar River, has it source at Mount Sethar to the west of the county town, passes through the county town as well as Nu-Zur, Hor-shul, and Ser-Ba, and empties into the Dadu River, flowing 305 kilometers through the grassland. The Da-chu and Do-khug rivers that through the northern and southern parts of the grassland flow some 90 and 81 kilometers respectively through the region. These rivers slowly wind about on the plateau through wide, shallow river valleys that have many offshoots and islands. This makes them first-class material for terracing, and many wide terraces with lush aquatic plants have been developed. These make for excellent pastures in the mountains. In the many wide and shallow river valleys in the northwestern part of the grassland where the four rivers have their sources, marshes have formed, and because the surrounding hills prevent the water from draining away, years of evaporation have resulted in an abundance of salt in the region. This is an indispensable natural source of water for livestock during estrus and reproduction. Hence the region has been the main area of contention in the frequent disputes over pastureland between Sethar and Qinghai's Da-ri county.

All of Serthar's pasturelands are spread out along the four rivers mentioned above. Along the Do-khug river basin are the pasturelands of Da-tshang and Nyan-lung township. To the south of Do-khug and on the other side of Mount Sethar lies the Ser-chu River, along the banks of which and in nearby ravines are the pasturelands of Hexi,

Tazi, Louruo, Chengguan, and Yalung townships. South of the Ser-chu river basin, upstream of which lie the pasturelands of Tag-tse, Kham-leb, Ke-kor, and Phu-bu townships. Further south is the Da-chu river basin. The pasturelands of Ran-chong are distributed along the banks and ravines of this river. Along the banks of all these four rivers one finds many tributaries and ravines that form a complicated network of rivers and hills. It is in this network that the herders of Sethar live, migrating from place to place with the changes of seasons. Generally speaking, the river valleys are their winter pastureland. When winter comes, the herders move to the banks of the rivers and can call to one another across the water. In summer they move to the hills on both sides to graze their livestock. The deeper recesses of the ravines are their autumn pastures. For them, these migrations from place to place are like walking upstairs and downstairs for us.

Because of the overall high altitude of the grassland, its northerly latitude, and its flat terrain, the cold airstream from the northern Bayangela mountain region descends directly to the grassland. As a result, the weather in Sethar is very cold. The winters are long, there is no absolutely frostless period through the year, and the climate is categorized as continental-plateau subfrigid. Therefore, the snow cover in winter is often about one *chi* high, and snow often falls in spring and summer. The average number of days of snowfall is sixty-eight per annum, the annual freezing period is as long as eight months (from October to May), and there are no marked differences between the seasons. During heavy snow-storms more than a meter of snow may fall and require two weeks to a month to melt. This frequently causes losses of livestock. Such heavy snowfall threatens the existence of cattle and sheep, but it provides favorable conditions for their growth and multiplication in the coming year. Although the weather here is cold, it is better than that of the Byang-Thang region in the western

part of Tibet, as precipitation is more abundant due the effect of the monsoon winds from the Hengduan Mountains. Yearly precipitation in Byang-Thang is only about 200 millimeters (on the Sethar grass lands it reaches 644 mm) and is concentrated mostly in the months of August and September. Also, temperature changes in Byang-Thang are quite extreme, with frequent snow, sleet, and hail. These affect animal-husbandry production.

The altitude of the Sethar grassland exceeds the upper limit for agriculture, and in some places even approaches the snow line. The temperature is also lower than the critical temperature for crop growth, for which reason food crops cannot be planted over most of the region. However, grass grows very well, and in many varieties. There are more than twenty different types on every square meter. The main types of grass are nut grass, flat sedge, and dogstail grass. There are also wild oats, leguminous *lan wan*, and other nutritious and delectable forage grasses. On some wet river banks there are also seeds which are rich in carbohydrates and can be eaten by both humans and livestock. As for herminium, this is also a favorite food among the herders. However, Sethar's mainpastureland is distributed in snow-line areas on the top of fragmented hills and in wind gaps 4, 400 to 4, 900 meters above sea level. These areas are usually overgrown with short grass less than ten centimeters high that hugs the ground surface and is both short and fine. The local herders call it *pang-tsa*, and only the spiny tongues of yak are able to lick it up. There are other grasses such as *yang mao*, fleawort, and tinder-grass that are also quite low growing. Although these mountainous grasses are short, they have highly developed root systems. Added to this is the fact that plant photosynthesis is increased by the very long hours of sunshine (2, 438 hours per year) and strong ultraviolet radiation, so that these mountain grasses have a high nutritional value——their

crude protein content reaches 30 percent. Livestock gain weight easily on such a diet.

Despite the Sethar grassland's high altitude and cole climate, it turns out an abundance of products. In addition to the various grasses described above, it also produces *Cordiceps sinensis, Fritillaria thunbergii, pilose antlers, musk, Rheum officinale, zhen jiu, Nardostchys*, notopterygium, and safflower (*Carthamus*). Monkeys, argali, and other rare animals are also quite common. Serthar's vegetation and climatic conditions determine that the main varieties of animals are herbivorous and cold resistant, for instance, yak, roebucks, chamois, marmots, and field mice. Also commonly seen are mice, wild sheep such as lynxes, and jackals and wolves. Wolves and lynxes pose serious threats to yak and sheep and are public pests, but on the other hand they eat field mice, marmots, and other animals harmful to the grassland. In this sense they deserve some credit for protecting the grassland, because such highland rodents as field mice and marmots may be small in size but do much damage. Everyone who has traveled on the Sethar grassland has been astounded at the great numbers of field mice and marmots. They dig countless holes on the grasslands and hill slopes, and the enormous amounts of earth they move turn whole stretches of grass into fields of dust. The destruction they cause to the grassland is numbered in the hundreds of thousands of *mu*, and the grass they consume is equivalent to a whole year's sheep fodder. Marmots also spread pestilences that endanger people's health. But these animals possess a certain economic value; their pelts which are thick, furry, and smooth, and have a bright sheen, can be made into various kinds of fur garments and command good prices abroad. Marmot meat can be eaten, and its fat processed into an ointment for burns and a lubricant for industrial use. Each marmot furnishes six to ten catties of meat and about fifteen catties of fat, and

so can be turned to good account. Grasses on the Sethar grassland that are poisonous to sheep and yak include *zuima cao, genhuang cao, Xianlan cao,* and *feiyan cao*, but there are not many of these, Besides, some poisonous grasses are innocuous during a certain stage of their growth. For instance, yak and sheep may eat *ge lan ya* before it goes to seed. And some of the grasses are not poisonous for all livestock; goats, for instance, are not harmed by *feiyan cao*. Moreover, most of the poisonous grasses have a caustic taste and livestock do not like them, so they little effect on the development of animal husbandry.

The Sethar grassland does not have a large forested area. On the grazing grounds 4.400 meters above sea level, in particular, there is only grass and some scrub, and one sees no trees. Only in the valleys (mostly semi-agricultural, semipastoral sreas) in the lower reaches of the Ser-chu, Nyi-chu, and Do-khug rivers 3, 700 to 4, 000 meters above sea level does one find some forests consisting of dragon spruces, firs, cypresses, and birches. In 1980, the forest cover was about 1, 725 square kilometers, accounting for 15 percent of the total area, and the stock of timber was more than 4.9million cubic meters. Little of it is left now, since more than a thousand workers of the Wengda Forestry Bureau came in 1996 to fell trees.

There are abundant minerals in the Sethar ares. Initial investigations made so far show that there is alluvial gold, crystal, coal, copper, iron, and vanadium, none of which has been developed and used yet, apart from gold. Talking about gold prospecting, I am reminded that many of the names of the small wetlands contain the word " gold. " Sethar, originally named Ser-Thang, means " gold dam"; Ser-La means "gold mountain"; Ser-Chu means gold river; and Ser-Ba means gold man. Did the ancestors of the Tibetan herders long ago foresee that gold would be discovered in Sethar? Abundant

gold does indeed exist in Sethar. According to records, in 1938 to 1942 alone, 8, 300 ounces of gold were produced in Sethar. This figure comes from the Guomindang's Seventh Conference on the Gold Industry. In 1979 and 1980, Sethar county organized herders in sideline production teams with the focus on producing gold, and sold 539 ounces of gold to the state. Today there are modern gold-dredging boats as big as small multistoried buildings on Sethar grasslands. Digging for gold has brought prosperity, but is damaging to the grasslands. Modernization always proceeds amid such contradictions.

Before 1950, communications were extremely difficult in this beautiful land of mountains, rivers, and forests. Although the broad grasslands of Sethar look open and smooth from nearby, one sees in the distance roads winding their way laboriously through perilous mountains and ravines. The Bayangela Mountains form a barrier on the northwestern side of the grassland, and to the southeast the Do-khug River and the Ser-La form a line separating the Sethar grassland from Qinghai's Guoluo and Sichuan's Aba regions. To the southwest, the Da-chu River and Da-duo Mountains form a line between Sethar and the counties of Ganzi and Luhuo. Only to the southeast is there a long and narrow passageway that follows the Ser-chu River and leads to "Grayong" (today the Jinchuan districts in Aba prefecture) . The people of Sethar themselves say this is the only passage and gateway into the Sethar grasslands. Only in 1960 was the highway from Luhuo to Sether opened to traffic, linking up with the Sichuan-Tibet trunk highway leading to Kangding. A bird's-view of the Sethar grasslands shows a highland basin surrounded on all four sides by high mountains and lying at the southern foot of the Bayangela Mountains and north of the Yarlong River. Such an inaccessible natural environment has for centuries virtually isolated the herders of the grasslands from the outside world and given them a state of near independence. Lack of

normal contacts with the outside resulted in the people here being quite accustomed to living in seclusion. Economic development was at a standstill, diseases ran rampant, people lived in poverty, and social development was ran sluggish. Although social classes had already appeared on the Sethar grassland before 1950, class antagonism was as yet not very obvious. In many respects, people's lifestyles remained as they had been in ancient times.

Where Did the Sethar Herders Come From?

There are practically no extant historical materials concerning Sethar. From the Qing dynasty to the days of Nationalist rule, no government institutions were set up here, nor were there any regents. Probably the only document that existed was a title-conferring paper left in a headman's tent from the Zhao Erfeng time of the Qing dynasty: a public announcement issued by the commissioner of Sichuan-Yunnam border affairs in the leap sixth month of the third year of the Xuantong reign. Nonetheless, we have been able to reconstitute the history of this region by means of various stories and legends as well as various habits and customs and cultural relics that have been passed down to this day. The most valuable among them is the verbal account of the family history of the Sethar headman of the Washul.

It is said that the ancestors of the Washul clan were from one of the six major surnames of ancient Tibet-the Dong. The Dong were subdivided into eighteen major portions (rDong-Shul-bCo-rGyad), among which were the Rishul, Nyanshul, Khyishul, Loshul, Goshul, Yagshul, Tashul, Washul, and others. An ancestor called Mud-bo-dong, who was a *fuo fa shen,* is said to have been an eloquent, highly authoritative leader who vanquished all enemies and won over many

people with his benevolence. He lived first at Yasru (meaning eastern flank) by Qinghai Lake. Dong had four sons, three of whom died early. When his fourth son was born, Dong invited a certain Zhaxi Sangpo, a lama of the Bon religion who was famous for his magical powers, to practice divination and foretell the child's future. Using a fox pelt as a talisman, the lama saved the infant's life, for which reason the boy was named Dong Washul-Skyab and also Dong Waser-Skyab, meaning "saved by a yellow fox." Washul-Skyab had a great many sons and grandsons who gave rise to collateral branches of the family, all with the surname Wa-shul, meaning "of the fox clan." Thus a new bloodline system was formed, called the "Washul Rus." By the time leadership of this "Rus" had been passed down to Wa-Shul-Phurba-kyabs, its members began to scatter and migrate in all directions, partly because the Mongols of the Xinjiang region invaded Qinghai and tribes of the Washul chan were defeated after fierce battles, and partly because various internal contradictions resulted in constant internecine fighting. As far as I am aware, in the several hundred years from the Yuan to the Ming dynasties, branches of the Washul clan appeared in Yu-ke of Ganzi prefecture's Daofu, Changtai of Baiyu, and Hongyuan of Aba prefecture. By the end of the Ming dynasty, Wa-Shul-phan, Wa-Shul-Ge-Le, and Wa-Shul-Ge-Gyu from the fourth generation of the Washul clan had led their people on long treks to the banks of the Do-khug River in today's Rangtang county in Aba prefecture, which is the region where the Dadu River has its source. To survive in this new environment, they began gradually to change their way of life to become semi-agricultural, semipastoral tribes.

One formulation has it that they are of the same origins as the Go-Lo nomads in the northern part of the Do-khug River. The Go-Lo grassland was their earliest habitat. Examination of maps dating from

before the Qing dynasty shows that this place was called "region of the Go-Lo tribe," or "region of the E-Lo (Go-Lo) wild barbarians." Within its scope lay a large tract of grassland along the Yarlong River and east of Songpan in four neighboring provinces, extending westward all the way to the Yellow River. The Washul tribe, which is one of the largest nomadic Tibetan tribes, claims to have migrated to this area from Ngari in western Tibet more than a thousand years ago, although there is no historical evidence for this claim. According to Chinese language historical documents and records, the ancient residents of the Go-Lo region before the Sui and Tang dynasties were Dangxiang Qiang people. During the Northern and Southern Dynasties period, the Dangxiang Qiang were highly prolific and led a primitive nomadic life in pursuit of water and forage. Their pasturelands reached Qiangtang to the west, Dangchang in the east, Taohuang to the north, and the Bayangela Mountains to the south, and they were the largest of all the ancient Qiang tribes. In the early years of the Tang dynasty, the power of the Tubos (Tibetans) rose in Tibet and soon penetrated toward the east and vanquished the Dangxiang. Some of the latter migrated to China's inland regions to evade Tubo attacks, whereas others remained, surrendered to the Tubos, and were assimilated by the Tibetans. As a result, the earliest Tibetan nomads emerged in this region. These were called "western barbarians" in Chinese history and most likely included people of the Washul tribe. In Tibetan, "Go-Lo" means "turning around" or "surrendering." It is said that the Tibetans, after having vanquished the Dandxiang, detested their intransigence and ordered them to change their name to Go-Lo. Another explanation is that "Go-Lo" means "rebel," for they were always rebelling against the forces that ruled them. The Go-Lo were at first divided into five major tribes and more than forty subtribes, each of which had its fixed pasturelands and grazed its cattle in different

districts. The Washul(meaning the "fox tribe") were one of the four major tribes and the predecessors of the Washul Sethar.

After the Yuan dynasty, the forces of the Mongol people gradually penetrated the Qinghai region, and large numbers of Mongol tribes migrated from the Xinjiang region to Qinghai. According to Washul Sethar herders' legends, their ancestors fought fierce battles with the Mongols but they were often defeated. The power of the Mongols penetrated ever more deeply. During the several hundred years from the Yuan to the Ming dynasties, the Washul tribes were kept busy moving from west to east and then from east to west. By the Ming dynasty, the Mongols had occupied most of the Go-Lo pasturelands, severely limiting the development of the Go-Lo tribes. They were thus forced to gradually move toward the agricultural regions in the southeast to find an environment where they might survive. In the course of such migrations, the Go-Lo tribes were attacked by the Mongols on the one hand and pillaged and killed one another because of internal contradictions on the other, so that the smaller tribes packed up and left. Frequent warfare destroyed the unity among the Go-Lo tribes. The Washul tribe broke away from the alliance of Go-Lo tribes and, led by Washul-Pu-Ba-ga, a third-generation headman of the Washul core tribe, moved to the banks of the Do-khug River in today's Aba prefecture.

After living several generations on the banks of the Do-khug River, their population grew and their tribe divided into many subtribes, and by the end of the Ming dynasty and beginning of the Qing dynasty had undergone substantial development. In Qing historical documentation, the Washul tribes of this period were called "Three A Shu." "A Shu" is homophonic with "Washul," and the name refers to the upper, middle, and lower A Shu tribes. The "Three A Shu" described in those annals are the three tribes of the

Wa-Shul at the height of their prosperity. The Sethar herders call this period the "La-Sum" era, "La-Sum" being the abbreviated term for Washul Lama Kyab and Washul Sum Je Kyab, two fourth generation headmen of the core Washul tribe. The claim is that during the La-Sum era, their power extended east to Qinghai's Jiuzhi county and Aba's No-er-gai, south to Zhuo-si-jia, west to the eastern end of the Sethar grassland, and north to Ban-am. This may be an exaggeration, but according to the Chinese language *Annals of Songan County:* "The Three A Shu tribes graze their cattle at a distance of some eight hundred *li* from the county town, have common borders with the barbarians by the Yellow River and in Gansu, and roam a thousand *li* in all directions." This shows that the Washul tribe did indeed experience a period of prosperity on the banks of the Do-khug River. And to expand their sphere of influence, they frequently launched raids to plunder the surrounding region. It is said that during the region of the Qing emperor Kangxi, some forty small tribes outside Aba that had surrendered to the Qing armies were frequently attacked by the Go-Lo and Washul tribes that had not surrendered. The afflicted tribes sent in so many pleas to the Qing government that the government was compelled to dispatch Military Commander Yue Zhongqi of Sichuan province with an army to suppress the attackers. After these were put down, the Washul tribes were "placed under the jurisdiction of the Zagunao Pacification Office." In the sixtieth year of Qing emperor Kangxi (1721C. E.), the three Washul tribes were accorded the titles *tu qianhu* and *tu baihu*, but for the nomadic tribes who lived at the juncture of Gansu, Qinghai, and Sichuan provinces-an area that none of the provinces could effectively govern-and who had never had any contact with the outside but sought their own survival and development, such titles were worth less than the paper they were written on, and the Qing rulers never had any power over

the tribes.

During the Qing dynasty's Yongzhen reign, some of the Washul tribes living along the banks of the Do-khug River, no longer able to withstand the frequent attacks by Qing armies, moved upstream along the river and migrated to the Sethar grassland where they hoped to rely on the grassland's natural barriers to mainrain their isolation from the outside world, thereby maintaining the ancient way of life passed down to them by their ancestors. There are many legends about this migration. During the Yongzhen reign, part of the three major Washul tribes trekked upstream along the Do-khug River into an unknown world, a world like that described in fairytales, in order to find wider spaces for survival. Their leaders were the three sons of Wa-Shul-Xia-Ba. When they saw the vast grassland abounding with grass and water, they were as elated as if they had discovered gold, and they named this grassland "Sethang," which means "golden land" to describe the bountiful Sethar grassland. Some people also say that their ancestors saw gold-colored horses when they came here, and named the place "Seta," which means "golden horse" in Tibetan. After settling down, the three brothers raced on horseback to determine who would be the headman, following the example in the story about how Gesar obtained the royal throne. They raced from the passageway mentioned earlier to the foot of the magic mountains, and then climbed to the summit of the mountain. The first to get there would become the headman.

Starting in the Qing dynasty, information about the Washul Sethar began to appear in Chinese language historical documents. From the "Qing Historical Manuscripts" we learn that the Qing government conferred the title of "chief leader" (*zhang guan si*) on the Washul Sethar headman in the seventh year of the Yongzhen reign. Examination of the "Comprehensive Annals of Sichuan" shows

that a "Wa-Qiu-Se-Ta" chieftain figured among the 120 chieftains under the jurisdiction of the Ya prefecture in the Dajianlu League. However, the Washul Sethar herders remember nothing about such conferments. So it is obvious that the above-mentioned conferment by the Qing government had no real effect other than to symbolically demonstrate the political link between the feudal court and the Washul Sethar tribes. This is shown by the fact that the Qing ruling classes of the time did not even know the names of the headmen of the Washul Sethar tribes, their populations, or the number of livestock they possessed, not to mention dispatching people to exercise direct government over them. Objectively, the Washul Sethar region was located in a remote mountainous region with practically no means of communication at the juncture of Gansu, Qinghai, and Sichuan. Too far from the authority of the ruling classes in other places and inaccessible to government decrees, this place was an area "outside the reach of government power" and thus Washul Sethar remained in a state of near isolation from the rest of the world. Toward the end of the Qing dynasty, Zhao Erfeng launched his campaign to "bring government territories back to the fold." All the headmen in the eastern regions of Tibet, great and small, fell one after another under Zhao Erfeng's armed onslaught and threats of force. Some were captured, others were exiled or killed. Although Zhao Erfeng possessed powerful forces and a great determination to carry out his policy, he vacillated when confronted with the vast, sparsely populated, remote, and inaccessible grassland of Sethar. It is noted in the "Records of the Construction of Xikang Province" that after Zhao Erfeng took Shiqu county, he confidently ordered his troops forward to attack Sethar, but when he was only a day's march from that region, his concerns gained the upper hand as he felt that "the wild men (meaning the Sethar herders) will be difficult to subdue as they do not

have any fixed place of residence and are always on the move." And so, "once Headman Fu-Dan of the wild men promised to restrain his people and never again to commit plunder, Zhao terminated his military actions." Of course there was no more mention of "reforming the headmen and bringing them back to the fold." Later, in the fifth month of the third year of Xuantong, Zhao Erfeng, now governor of Sichuan, "dispatched Kou Zhuo, *ji yuan* of Ganzi, to a certain region [meaning Sethar] to create a population and livestock register and make preparations for establishing county governance"① Soon after that, however, the 1911 Revolution broke out, Zhao Erfeng was killed, and his plan to set up county governance on the Sethar grassland came to naught. Just as recorded by Liu Zanting in his "Documents on the Establishment of Governance at Sethar," "Sethar, also called Se-Da... surrendered in the third year of Xuantong, and Minister of Border Affairs Zhao Erfeng selected personnel to conduct an investigation in order to convert the region and rename it Dawei county. However the Great Revolution took place, the matter was not carried through, and the region remains independent." (See copy of Liu Zanting's "Annals of Daofu County: Sethar Appendix," made by the Beijing Library of Ethnic Culture.) Clearly, the Sethar grassland remained closed to the outside and semi-independent after Zhao Erfeng's attempt to "reform the headmen and bring them back to the fold."

In the early years of the Republic, warlords were fighting among themselves and no one had any time for the southwest border region or looked into matters concerning the remote and distant Sethar grassland. The result was that the herders there for a long time

① See Fu Hao, *Records of Construction of Xikang province*, "The Surrender of Go-Lo Sethar".

retained de facto independence. Such objective independence bred a perception of self-determination among the people of the Washul Sethar tribes. The herders' traditional ruggedness, intrepidity, and fearlessness before danger and violence furthered their determination to maintain their political independence. This characteristic of theirs was fully manifested in their later struggles with the Nationalist (or Guomindang) warlord Ma Bufang. After the setting up of the Republic, the warlords in Sichuan, Gansu, and Qinghai provinces engaged in struggles for spheres of influence, and the Go-Lo and Washul grasslands at the juncture of the three provinces became one of the objects of contention. In order to enlarge his sphere of influence, Qinghai's warlord, Ma Bufang, harshly suppressed and repeatedly pillaged the people of the Go-Lo tribes during the quarter century from 1920, giving the Go-Lo grasslands and its people no peace. The population declined, as did the number of livestock, and the once "independent" Go-Lo tribes dispersed under Ma Bufang's attacks. However, Ma Bufang did not dare behave in such a reckless and unbridled manner when it came to the neighboring Sethar grassland. According to the reminiscences of a good many elderly herders, about fifty or sixty years ago, after vanquishing the Go-Lo tribes, Ma Bufang attempted to conquer the Washul Sethar tribes as well. He sent a letter to Washul Ya-Sang-Gen, headman of the Sethar tribes, and enclosed a number of steel needles, implying that his forces were about to attack the Sethar grassland and that their advance would be as irresistible as a needle made of steel. By doing so he meant to coerce the Washul Sethar tribes into surrendering. However, upon the insistence of the broad masses of herders, their headman rejected Ma Bufang's demand that he surrender, smashed the steel needles contained in the letter, and returned the pieces to Ma Bufang in the original envelope, thus expressing the Sethar herders' firm

determination to oppose tyranny. This tells us that an isolated but highly self-determined body of people who "look at the sky from the bottom of a well" (i. e. , have a limited experience of outside affairs) may very well take actions that show contempt and disregard for all consequences. Confronted with warlord Ma Bufang's forces-an enemy ten times stronger than themselves-they mobilized several thousand men and some three hundred rifles and stood ready to resist aggression. In face of this determined body of people, Ma Bufang ultimately decided not to go on the offensive. But the Washul Sethar herders' victory brought them long years of misery. Although Ma Bufang cancelled his plan for military invasion of the Sethar grassland, he adopted a more diabolic means to vanquish the Sethar herders: an economic blockade that lasted a full twenty years. That twenty-year blockade had serious effects on the washul Sethar herders who had not attained complete economic self-sufficiency. Sources of *tsamba*, their favorite food, virtually dried up, and they were forced to subsist all year round on yoghurt, milk curds, and wild herminium. Dietary increases of milk and meat would normally require the imbibing of more tea, hut due to the economic blockade the herders had very little tea to drink during those twenty years, and they shed tears as they stared at the clear water in their bowls. Salt is an indispensable ingredient in the diet of both human and livestock on the grasslands. Without it, people become weak and the conception rate among livestock declines. It is said that in order to survive, the Washul Sethar herdsmen went out on many armed expeditions during these twenty years to obtain salt from the salt lakes of Qinghai. They fought bloody pitched battles with Ma Bufang's forces, and each time sustained heavy casualties. However, the Washul Sethar men preferred to die in battle rather than bow down before Ma Bufang, or perform *ula* corvee services, or pay taxes. In their own words, they

"would rather die by the sword than become slaves of Ma Bufang's bandits."

The twenty-year blockade brought the Sethar herders' traditional trading activities with the surrounding agricultural regions to a virtual standstill. No one bought their yak hides, yak butter, sheep pelts, wool, or other animal-husbandry products, and this put the herders' economy in a very parlous position. To survive, and to defeat Ma Bufang's economic blockade, the men of Washul Sethar resorted to plunder to make up for shortages of the means of livelihood and production, and banditry became a permanent occupation with them. The Sethar grassland lies across two important commercial roads from Yushu to Songpan and Dajianlu (Kangding). The Sethar men would use the advantageous terrain to attack the caravans of wealthy merchants, and thus obtain such merchandise as tea, salt, and grain-things in which they were not self-sufficient but could not do without. Although such plundering sometimes entailed casualties, it was nevertheless a relatively easy way to secure the daily necessities denied them by the blockade. As time went by, the plundering activities of the men of Washul Sethar became known throughout the region, and the Sethar people gained notoriety as a people that lived by banditry. This apparently bears out Goethe's words: "The entire secret of life lies in giving up survival for the sake of survival" ①.

The following has been written about the Sethar herders' banditry:

> It is said that at E-Lo [pre-Liberation scholars were in the habit of attributing Washul Sethar to E-Lo, or Go-Lo], a yearly meeting called the E-Lo Banjia [which might be translated as the yearly meeting of E-Lo bandits] was held

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① Goethe, *Maxims and Reflections*, Guangzhou: Huacheng Publishing House, 1998.

with the participation of all persons, male and female, old and young. After the meeting, all the participants went out to engage in banditry, and the loot was evenly divided among them. Even the children received their share, this being done to breed courage in young children for eventual participation in such activities.[1]

And so, up to 1950 eight generations of the herders of Washul Sethar were shut off from the world, blockaded in the Sethar grassland, with little contact with the outside. And they "never performed ula corvees or paid any livestock taxes," for which reason the region was described as being "beyond the pale."[2] The ruling classes in past years have even called the people of Washul Sethar "wild people" and "barbarians." But in fact these herders are neither. It is the many years of blockades imposed on Washul Sethar by the former ruling classes that created the life of near isolation led by Serthar's people, delayed social advance in Sethar, and cultivated the Washul Sethar people's rugged, intrepid, and fearless character.

And so, generation after generation of Sethar herders have existed on this grassland where there are "no roads but roads everywhere," and they have created a unique form of society with unique ethical standards:

1. The form of social organization is the tribe. All people believe in sacred mountains, and practically every tribe has its sacred mountain. When major events affecting the entire tribe take place, sacrificial ceremonies are held at the foot of the sacred mountain to

① Xie Guo'an, "Qiangtang: the Summit of the Xikang-Tibet Plateau," *Kang zang yanjiu* (Xikang-Tibet Research Monthly) 3.

② See "Collection of Social Investigation Materials Concerning the Ganzi Tibetan Region," edited and published in June 1957 by the General Office of the Nationalities Commission of the National People's Congress.

pray for its blessings. Sacred mountains occupy an important place in the minds of all people.

2. Right and wrong, and rewards and punishments are decided on the basis of common law. This is a set of laws that do not exist in written form, but are actually standards established by people through long social practice and used to deal with various problems. For example, when someone is killed, the killer is normally not put to death, but pays the victim's family a certain amount of money as compensation. And to this day, when there are disputes over marriages or pastures in the Sethar region and Qinghai's Go-Lo region, some people still invite elderly persons who enjoy high prestige and universal respect to mediate in accordance with the common law.

Although banditry and theft are both criminal actions as far as modern law is concerned, the Sethar herders draw a strict line between the two. They maintain that theft is shameful and should be severely punished under common law. They have an adage that goes, "He who steals needle and thread when young will steal yak when he grows up." Parents are always warning their children not to steal things. Hence, theft was very rare in traditional Sethar society. Banditry, however, was quite another thing in the Sethar herdsmen's traditional concepts. It was quite an open matter during the years that the herders lived in tribal units. However today, more than fifty years later, the Sethar herders are becoming accustomed to going to the government or to cadres when they encounter contradictions or disputes, and banditry has become history.

Since China's reform and opening up in the 1980s, and after a score of years of development, the market economy has already penetrated all corners of the Sethar pastoral region. People's lives have greatly improved, and they can buy anything, so long as they have the money. Communications are convenient now, with highways linking

up most of the townships. At the same time, however, new problems have emerged. In 1994, when I came again to this grassland, occasional gunfire at night alarmed the American professor Nancy Levine. We later learned that the number of outsiders in Sethar has sharply risen since reform and opening up. Among them are Han, Hui, and Tibetans from other regions. There are even foreign tourists from the West. The market economy is beguiling a small number of adventurers who wish to get rich overnight, and so yak and sheep rustlers have increased. When yak or sheep were stolen in the past, they could be recovered in two or three days by following their hoof marks, but today the livestock are quickly slaughtered or sold for several thousand yuan apiece on the livestock market. The herders are obliged to raise dogs and buy guns as protection against thieves. Sometimes they fire a few shots at night even when nothing has happened, as if to say to the thieves: Bullets do not have eyes, and intruders will certainly die!

Pastures Versus Pastures?

Grass is the food on which livestock subsist, and cattle raising cannot occur without pastures. The pastures are to herders as land is to peasants. They are the basic means of production for livestock production and the primary base for converting plant-type products into animal-type products. The Sethar herders live together in tribal units, with each tribe possessing its own pastures clearly demarcated by such markers as mountains, rivers, roads, stones, caves, pagodas, Mani piles, ravines, forests, monasteries, marshes, sand fiats, and so forth. All herdsmen in a tribe have the right to use the pastures belonging to their own tribe, and have the responsibility and duty to defend their tribe's pastures against encroachment by outside forces.

Tribes may not graze their livestock beyond the borders of their pastures. If they do, disputes and even armed conflict may result. Before 1950, contention over pastures frequently led to bloodshed in Sethar. For example, the pastures of the Ban-xu tribe of Sethar and the Hong-ke tribe of Go-Lo were historically demarcated by the Bayangela mountain range. Starting at the end of fall 1943, a minor headman of the Hong-ke tribe named Ka-se-xiang-tso led more than thirty herders' households across the historical boundary formed by the Bayangela Mountains to graze their livestock on the pastures at Ni-yang-xi-ga-bu and other places belonging to the Sethar Banxu tribe. At the time, So-da, the headman of the Banxu, assembled more than fiftymen and guns of that tribe in readiness to expel the intruders. Armed conflict was eventually averted by means of mediation, but the Hong-ke tribe paid the Banxu tribe one horse and one musket for what was a pasture dispute between a tribe in the Sethar region and a tribe from another region. Similarly, tribes within the region could not graze their livestock beyond their borders. For example, the Upper Shul-ta-tod-ma tribe and the Lower Shul-ta-tod-ma tribe were once related tribes belonging to the same big tribe forty or fifty years ago, and later divided into two tribes along with increases in population and livestock. However, many disputes over pastureland then took place between them. The headmen of the two tribes were uncle-nephew relatives, but became implacable enemies because of the pasture dispute. It is evident that pasture interests came before clan relations.

In the past, no one could buy, sell, or give away the tribes' pasturelands; this was another characteristic of public ownership among the pastoral tribes. In 927, Washul-ga-do, the former grand headman of Sethar, ordered a junior kinsman to go to the home of the big headman of the Da-Ri Hong-ke clan in Qinghai in order to expand the influence of the Washul household. He went without taking along

a single household, yak, or piece of grassland, only one relatively good-quality musket. Later the Hong-ke tribe became stronger and more prosperous due to increases in its armed might. Its population grew and its livestock increased very rapidly so that the tribe's pastureland was no longer sufficient for its own needs. So the headman, as a relative of the Sethar headman, had to rent or borrow Sethar's pastures, but he could not occupy them or buy them. The Sethar herders told us that before the headman could sell or rent out pastures, he usually had to obtain advance approval from a general meeting of the tribe or from an elders' caucus, otherwise the tribe's herdsmen would refuse thereafter to take part in armed conflict to contend for pastures or protect the tribe's pastures.

All herders in the tribe were duty bound to protect the boundaries of the tribe's pasturelands against encroachment. This was another important characteristic of the pastoral tribes' public ownership. Each tribe frequently organized mountain patrols to protect their pastures. The patrols, which consisted of a few tens or up to a hundred or more men, went around usually every ten or more days to see if the livestock of other tribes had been set out to graze on their pastures. All members of the patrol had to equip themselves with a musket, sword, cudgel, or other weapon. All the muskets in the tribe would be pooled when such patrols went out. Apart from such patrols, lookouts were also stationed on the highest mountaintops within the pasturelands, and if another tribe's livestock crossed the boundary into their pastures, and if there were just a few of them, the animals' tails might be cut off. But if there were many, the lookouts would shout or fire shots to alert the tribe. Emergency teams were normally organized on the basis of the Ru-kor, or "livestock pen," and were called Ra-da, meaning "reinforcements" or "pursuit." And if anyone shouted: "Ra-da, Ra-da!" all the "Ra-da" organizations would assemble with

the utmost celerity and set out for the trouble spot. When the Washul Qu-Ge tribe once entered into a dispute over pastures with a tribe in Qinghai's Dari, more than a hundred people assembled in the time it takes to drink a bowl of tea. All of them-from seventy-year-old grandmothers to children seven or eight years old-set forth to the field of battle and took part in the armed clash. As a result of their lightning-quick action, they captured more than a hundred firearms and several dozen horses from the invaders. Reminiscing about this incident, elderly herdsman Pa-ren says: "When I heard an old grandmother wailing 'Ra-da,' the fires of anger were ignited in my heart. How could we allow the pastures that our ancestors had lived on for generations to be occupied by others? I rushed to the battlefield and charged toward the enemy amid bullets that fell like raindrops. I captured three rifles and a horse, and a bullet made a small hole in one of my ears." Obviously, every herdsman was prepared to sacrifice his all, even his life, to protect the tribe's pastures against outside invasion.

The Sethar tribes' pastures were divided into winter, summer, and fall pastures. Sometimes there were also spring pastures, depending on the amount of pastures the tribe possessed. The tribes would move three or four times a year among these pastures, and each migration was conducted according to a unified schedule. No one was allowed to move on his or her own. Those who moved first without authorization were fined a yak or a horse. This was done to limit the possibility of some households going first to occupy the best pastures. There were also clear demarcations among the pastures for each season, the purpose being to protect the pastures. For instance, herders living on the winter pastures were not allowed to graze their livestock on the fall pastures, as this would reduce the amount of winter pasturage and affect the wintering of the livestock. Those who

broke this rule would be fined a yak or a sheep, depending on the number of livestock that crossed the boundaries. This averted contention within the tribes for pastures. Each move to new pastures was generally conducted by living in *rukor* units (three to eight householе corrals). The location of residence was not open to choice, otherwise some *rukor* would suffer since where were considerable differences between the quality of the pastures, whatever the season. For example, there was a little gulch called Rong-ge-ma (meaning "windy gulch") among the winter pastures of the Washul-qu-ge tribe. The winds were so strong there that tents would often be blown down, and the *rukor* living in this gulch would have to spend the nights in the open during the cold winters. Many livestock were also frozen to death. The various *rukor* were therefore unwilling to live there when the winter pastures were allocated. To resolve such contradictions, the tribes had two ways of allocating pastures. The first was by means of rotation. So if a tribe had ten *rukor*. Each would have its turn every ten years. In other words, they would stay at pastures like the Rong-ge-ma once every ten years. The result of such egalitarian allocation was to limit the advent of private ownership of the pastures, since private occupation could not exist with each *rukor* staying only half a year at a pasturage. The other method was by drawing lots. The names of the locations were written on slips of paper which were then balled up and drawn by representatives of the *rukor*. Place of stay was determined by the lots that were drawn. However, there were no hard and fast boundaries between the *rukor* at a pasturage, and livestock could be grazed at will, or could be mingled together without danger of there being disputes. With the approval of the tribal meeting or the caucus of elders, pastures could also be rented out, on condition that the needs of the tribe itself were satisfied. The livestock obtained from renting out pastures were generally used for the tribe's collective

activities. such as horse races, scripture reading for the tribe's peace and security, and other such yearly activities. However, there were also a small number of cases where the tribes rented out the headmen's privately owned pastures. The people to whom pastures were rented were mainly passing merchants or other tribes who came to Sethar. The other tribes that leased pastures generally shared the rental costs evenly among their own members and used the pastures collectively. Along with the emergence of the tribal alliance, more and more outside tribes appeared in Sethar, accounting for more than 70 percent of the Sethar tribes. And after the emergence of the tribal alliance, many important collective activities, including religious activities, were taken over by the headmen of the alliance. Thus, it was later ruled that rentals for pastures were to be handed to the general headman of the tribal alliance and used for the alliance's collective activities. It was also explicitly stipulated that each household should submit one sheepskin every three years plus some of the yak butter produced every day by their livestock. This rule remained in force until the eve of the Democratic Reform in 1959, when it was terminated.

Today, society has changed and there are new policies. In the 1980s, the livestock of the Sethar herders were again distributed to each household, and a system of contracting or responsibility for the pastures is now being implemented. The winter pastures have basically been allocated to the households, and most herder families possess permanent winter housing. The summer and fall pastures have also been divided into fixed grazing grounds for each family or household. Although coutradiction and armed conflict occasionally take place over pastures, most of the disputes are resolved by government mediation instead of force of arms, for which reason the Sethar grassland is much more peaceful than before. The principal issue faced on the grassland

now is the contradiction between livestook and grazing resources. In other words, as the number of livestock rapidly increases, the pastures are becoming insufficient and even deteriorating. Hence, an important task for the Sethar government and the herders over the next twenty years or so is large-scale basic construction of pastures, including construction of caokulun(fenced pastures).

A Livestock Structure Based on Yak and Its Significance for Wealth

On the way, our survey team discussed the issue of personal property. As an American, Nancy Levine places importance on such property as houses and stock certificates. We in Beijing place importance on such things as bank savings and furniture. Friends and relatives in my hometown place importance on land, livestock, and precious stones. To the Sethar herders, livestock are as important as land is to peasants. Farmers plant crops to increase their wealth. While herders develop livestock breeding to increase their wealth. Because their products differ, the value which these two sectors of production place on wealth also differs. The main wealth of the Sethar herders consists of livestock. Since the land in the pastoral regions cannot directly produce the means of livelihood, the herders can only obtain their means of livelihood from livestock. Hence, the number of livestock is the yardstick of wealth in the Sethar region. Livestock become the basic form of wealth among the Sethar herders because these provide the latter with the greater part of the means of production and livelihood-clothing, food, and housing, for example. The Sethar herders reside in self-made yak-hair tents, wear gowns sewn out of sheepskins and boots made of yak leather, and eat beef and mutton as well as yak butter, yogurt, milk curds, and other livestock products

made of milk. On the road, their primary means of transport are yak and horses. They burn yak dung as fuel. The bags, ropes, and saddles they used all have to do with yak and sheep. Generally, in a commercially developed society, money is more important than anything else, but coins and paper money were very rarely used in Sethar before 1950, and many people did not even know what paper money looked like. It is said that silver dollars bearing depictions of Yuan Shikai were once used here for a period of time, the reason being that Han merchants used such silver dollars as a trading medium. Later, however, these silver dollars became unusable because of the economic blockade and, instead of serving as currency, many of these became ornaments for Sethar women, Head and waist ornaments, for instance, often bore thirty or forty silver dollars. However, this does not mean there was no currency in Sether. Before 1950, barter trade was practiced in the Sethar region, and the medium for such trade was livestock. More often than not, yak served as the standard of value. During exchanges of livestock, in particular, the standard of conversion used was as follows:

Horse: six yak for a high-quality horse; five yak for a medium-quality house; and three yak for a low-quality horse

Sheep: one yak for five ordinary rams; one yak for four ewes; and one yak for three large and well-fed rams

Pian niu (hybrid offspring of a bull and a female yak): one yak plus one small ox for one *pian niu*; and two yak for one female *pian niu*

Yak butter: one yak for seventy or eighty catties of yak butter

Qingke barley: one yak for three or four catties of barley.

Other than serving as a medium for commercial exchange,

livestock were also the main targets of contention for social wealth among various social classes. For example, in one year, a headman of Sethar's Qu-Yong tribes, A-Wu-Suo-Da-Fan, led his herders in robbing neighboring regions of more than a thousand livestock. The Qu-Yong tribes were among the strongest in the Sethar region and the most prosperous among them had as many as 8,670 livestock, most of which, apparently, had been seized from other tribes. Another example was the mutual seizing of livestock among the Hong-ke of Sethar and Qinghai, reaching as many as 1,729 head within a few years. One of the most frequent ways of attacking or taking reprisals among the herders or tribes in Sethar was to cut off the tail hair of yak and houses. This was a grave insult, as it was most shameful and a loss of face for a herdsman to have the tail hairs of his horse off. There is a saying among the herders: "He who cannot protect his horse's tail is unable to protect the livestock belonging to his family and tribe." Furthermore, according to the common law of Sethar, all punishment and compensation were calculated in terms of livestock. For example, the fine for breaking rules of pasture migrations was one head of cattle, and compensation for the killing of a headman was sixteen head of *pian niu*. It is evident that the most basic wealth of herders in the Sethar pastoral region was neither land nor money, but livestock. They depended on livestock breeding to expand reproduction, and on livestock products to maintain and improve their livelihood. For the herders to increase their wealth, the most important condition was the structure of their livestock species. In other words, the herder's wealth was specifically manifested in the structure of their livestock species. The livestock structure differed in different regions. In the Sethar region, cattle accounted for the greatest proportion of the livestock, and by cattle was meant, in the main, yak. Statistics show that yak accounted for approximately 85 percent of the total number of cattle,

the reason being that yak are best suited to Sethar's natural conditions. First of all, yak are adapted to the grassland's cold and oxygen-scarce environment, and do not hesitate to stand in the open even on stormy nights when the temperature is more than twenty degrees below. When snow drifts are more than a foot thick, a yak will move aside the snow with its hooves and muzzle to get at the dry grass underneath. The hair of a yak is very long, so it does not fear the wind, snow, and low temperatures of the high plateau. But it cannot stand warm and humid climates. It begins to pant when the temperature goes above 25 degrees, and may sicken and even die if exposed too long to such temperatures. The most extreme temperatures of the Sethar grassland are not very low, and are best suited to the yak's way of life. Second, the role of the yak in the Sethar herders' life was determined by its enormous economic significance. Yak not only served them as means of transportation, but also provided them with such highly nutritious livestock products as milk, butter, and curds, and were also the sole source of materials for making ropes, wool fabrics, sacks, and Tibetan-style boots. Investigations show that a yak cow produces at least one calf every two years. It takes three years for a yak to mature, and its lifespan is usually around fifteen years. Thus, a yak cow has an average of six caloes during its lifetime which is great contribution to the herders. A yak bull between four and fifteen years of age generally weighs between 200 and 400 kilograms and is entirely capable of providing a herdsman with a year's meat. A yak cow normally produces around twenty catties of butter per year and more than ten catties of curds, which supply a herder with half a year of such food. The dung of ten yak is fully sufficient to meet the herder's fuel needs. Generally speaking, ten yak produce twelve catties of hair and wool per year, or 120 catties every ten years, which is sufficient to weave a medium-sized tent. One such tent can be used for more

than ten years.

The structure of the Sethar herders' diet was relatively simple. Their main food, other than *tsamba*, was meat and milk. There were few nonstaple foodstuffs, especially vegetables. However, other than fat, the yak's meat, milk, mild products, butter, curds, and yoghurt contain proteins, minerals, and many kinds of vitamins. Their fat and protein content is higher than that of plants, and of better quality. That is why the Sethar herders are normally developed and quite healthy. In Sethar, I weighed five three-year-old children. Their average weight was about 50 kilograms, which is more than that of children of the same age in agricultural regions. This shows that the healthy constitutions of the Sethar herders have much to do with their substantial consumption of animal protein. In particular, the high fat content of meat and milk products greatly increases the caloric content of the herders' physique and enables them to adapt to the grassland's natural environment which is marked by high altitude and cold climate.

Due to the fact that few trees grow on the high, frigid, and windy grassland, people depend on yak dung for the fuel they need in their everyday life. After being dried in the sun, yak dung burns very well and does not give off irritating odors.

In sum, everything on a yak, from its hair to its dung, is useful to the Sethar herders. Yak are also able to find their way, and are reliable guides when heavy snow covers the ground and mountain paths become indiscernible. Load-bearing yak are often sent on ahead to break open a path for sheep and humans who follow behind. Due to long years of natural selection, yak have the ability to withstand inclement natural surroundings characterized by high altitudes, rarefied air, cold climates, and long periods of withered grass. For this reason the herders regard them as treasures and affectionately call

them *nor-bu*, which means "treasure." Documentation shows that China has 12.3 million yak, accounting for 85 percent of the world's total. And those in Tibet, Qinghai, and other Tibetan districts account for more than 80 percent of the yak in China as a whole. They are known as "ships of the high plateaus." Archeological discoveries prove that the ancestors of today's Tibetans who lived more than three thousand years ago in the Nuomuhong district of Qinghai had already successfully domesticated the fierce wild yak and were weaving fabrics with yak hair[①]. In the "Ancient Historical Writings in the Tibetan Language at Dunhuang" we also find vivid descriptions of Tibetans "encircling and hunting wild yak for pleasure.., and to subdue and capture wild yaks" in the time of Tubo's Qi-li-suo-zan, which indicates that the Tibetan people have had a long tradition and history of domesticating yak. It also tells us how important a role the yak has played in the history of the Tibetan people. Little wonder that a good many legends extolling the yak are still extant in such places as Sethar, Shiqu, and Yushu. The Sethar herders have even named their ancestors' sacred mountain *Zhu-ri*, or "Wild Yak Mountain." Many elderly people prefer to ride on yak than on horses, because the yak walks very steadily on snow-covered plains and frozen rivers, and can soon find its way back if separated from the group. It also serves to break open a path in snow-bound passes. Thus the herders use yak when crossing high mountains and frozen rivers, so as to conserve their horses' strength and avoid danger. This explainswhy the yak occupies such a revered position in the perceptions of the Tibetan herders. The yak has always ranked first on their list of wealth and, after the reform of the 1980s, has acquired new economic significance as more and more yak are being sold on the market in exchange for

① see *Wenwu* 6 [1960].

cash.

The Tibetan sheep is another important economic animal on the Sethar grassland and bears especially important economic significance for the Sethar herders. Like the yak, the Tibetan sheep possesses such characteristics as adaptability to cold, rough fodder, and grazing on high mountains. However, it occupies a lesser position than the yak, one of the reasons being that wool, the product of its body, is connected with foreign trade and could not be exported because of the long-term blockade of the Sethar grassland before 1950 so that its value could not manifest itself. The above structure changed after 1950 and the status of sheep has improved somewhat because the state has purchased wool at high prices and communications have improved considerably. The hide and meat of the Tibetan sheep are indispensable means of subsistence for the Sethar herders. On the Sethar grassland where the average altitude is more than four thousand meters above sea level, life in winter would have been unimaginable without a sheepskin coat. The great majority of the sheepskin coats worn by the herders were made of sheepskins. Each coat required seven to eight sheepskins and could be used at least five or six years. Thus a herder could be fully self-sufficient in clothing if he had four or five sheep. However, there were on average only three sheep per person in Sethar before 1950, and most poor herders' families had no sheep. Sheep are gregarious animals and two or three sheep are, in general, difficult to care for. A flock of sheep must consist of more than ten sheep for normal management. Mutton is the Sethar herders' best and favorite food. It is the most delectable course for entertaining guests, and especially when treating distinguished visitors. Sheep also provide the herders with the most important materials for making felt cushions, saddle blankets, *muzi* (a kind of woolen fabric), laces for their footwear, and sashes. Products made of wool, sheepskin, yak

hair, and yak skins basically satisfy the herders' households' material needs. Sheep are lighter, faster, and more nimble than yak and are suitable for long-distance grazing. Flocks of sheep are generally grazed individually in the Sethar region, and young people able to keep up with the flocks are chosen to act as shepherds. However, sheep have two fatal shortcomings. One is that it is difficult for them to cross rivers. The Sethar grassland with its many rivers presents a great inconvenience for herders moving to other grazing grounds, especially when the rivers are in spate in summer and fall. Sheep are often washed away. The problem was solved only after 1950 when bridges were built everywhere. Second, sheep are small in size and tasty, and as many as several tens of sheep may be killed by wolves in a single night. That is why Sethar has very few sheep compared with Shiqu, Go-Lo, and Ngari.

Horses are few on the Sethar grassland and account for only 4 percent of all livestock, unlike animal husbandry among the Mongols and Kazakhs, where horses are of prime economic value. This is determined by the economic effect of horses on the Sethar grassland. Like most Tibetans, the Sethar herders do not eat horse meat, drink horse milk, or use horse hide. A horse is useless to the Sethar herders once it dies. On the other hand, prior to Liberation the people of Sethar found themselves constantly in an environment of armed conflict, disputes, and plunder in which horses were an indispensable instrument. With horses, it was possible to move away within a few hours or go on the offensive when enemies attacked or when faced with plundering invaders during intertribal warfare. Even the formidable Qing minister Zhao Erfeng felt that [the herders] "are difficult to subdue as their movements are quite unpredictable"①. That is why the

① "Notes on the Construction of Xikang".

Sethar herders place so much importance on raising horses. Although now, after 1950, roads lead in every direction, to this day horses are still the most convenient form of transportation for the herders on the Sethar grassland. On long trips, they can take along several horses and, riding them by turns, travel seventy or eighty kilometers in a day. In emergencies, they can travel several days on end without resting. This was the advantage of cavalry in past history. Horses linked up the scattered and always moving herders. Settlements on the grassland were often separated by tens or even hundreds of kilometers, but the herders were quite well informed, the reason being that they had horses. If anything happened, someone would get on a horse and take the news to other settlements, and very soon the entire grassland would know about the matter. On the Sethar grassland, horses had economic value only when they were sold commercially, but they possessed important significance as a means of communication, and especially when used as military instruments. In the past, when intertribal wars occurred among the Sethar tribes because of contention over water, grass, or salt lakes, or because of the theft of cattle or horses, or because of vendettas, young man from the various would take up rifles, get on swift horses, and immediately become a highly mobile armed force. The number of horses frequently had an important bearing on victory or defeat in war, and the measure of a tribe's strength was actually the ratio of its men and horses. That is why many well-to-do herders and headmen raised large numbers of horses, even if these had little economic value. For instance, the Qu-cang tribe was known as a very powerful tribe in Sethar. Its headman, a person of considerable reputation, possessed 150 head of cattle, twenty-four horses, and thirty-four sheep. The 350 households of this tribe, numbering some 1, 900 persons, possessed 23, 000 cattle and 1, 600 horses, and an average of one gun and four horses per household.

Why so many horses? According to the herders of this tribe, there were a number of salt lakes within the boundaries of the Qu-cang tribe, and neighboring tribes would bring their cattle here every year to drink salt water, with the result that there were thefts, leading to disputes and armed conflict. Thus the Qu-cang tribe every year contracted more bitter enmities, extending from Da-ri in the north to Lu-hua in the south and Ni-ba gorge in the west, and the tribesmen had to remain constantly in a state of war preparedness before 1950. Today, the greatest numrber of' horses in Sethar county is to be found at Ta-zi township where the Qu-cang tribe is located.

The horse races held in June every year were the grandest gatherings on the Sethar grassland. At such races, fine horses and skilled riders won admiration and praise. The girls like young fellows who were adept in horsemanship. Merchants and "Mag-Bon" (officials of military affairs) liked the horses that won races. Hence, deals for choosing lovers and for choosing the best horses took place simultaneously on the racing grounds. Winning horses would command high prices after the races, and the best riders would get the best girls. This, however, was not the original intent of the races, according to the herders. At the outset, the races served the needs of animal-husbandry production. The races were a means to encourage the horses' physical growth, as racing would increase the horses' appetite and make them eat more grass.

Whenever the racing season came around, the herdsmen would instruct their children or engage skilled riders to run their horses. The races were braid precisely to promote such running. Later, along with social development and the rise of commerce the races took on new content, such as entertainment, seeking prospective spouses, exchanging goods, and so forth. Today, the annual races have become the grandest sports meet and goods-exchang gathering in the county.

Beore 1950, the Sethar herders regarded a good horse, a rifle, and courage as a young man's three treasures with which he could hold sway over the grassland. This shows the special importance horses had for the people of Sethar.

Dogs are domesticated animals that play a special role for the Sethar herders. They do not constitute livestock, but they are closely related the safety of livestock, which is why they are mentioned here. Why do the herders raise dogs? There is a story that explains this mater very well:

> Once upon a time, Headman E-Lo Kang-se-er raised several tens of fierce dogs in his tent. When the cattle and sheep came back in the evening, the dogs were placed around the pasture grounds to stand guard. One night, several tens of enemies came to attack the headman. But the dogs discovered them before they approached the tent and began to bite them. A fierce battle ensued between the enemies and the dogs, and as a result the enemies were driven away. The next day when the headman rose from his sleep he found the corpses of several enemis and dogs nearby, and only then did he know that enemis had come to attack him the night before. Thereafter he raised even more fierce dogs. [1]

Before 1950, all households did indeed raise several or even several tens of dogs, all massive and fierce beasts. If they were not held in check, no one could approach their owners' tents. Because of the prevalence of brigandage and the many jackals on the Sethar

[1] Zhuang Xueben, *Collection of Tibetan Folk Tales.*

grasslands, the dogs' alarm-raising and defensive capabilities were indispensable for protecting the herders' property. These dogs could recognize their master, his family members, and even his livestock. The dogs would have to be tied with iron chains, or else they would pounce upon any strangers. Nor were they intimidated by swords or sticks. In the Sethar pastoral region, the price of a good dog was higher than that of several yak, for which reason the herders greatly resented it when someone struck their dogs. About such persons, they would say, "When they can't stand up to the master, they take it out on the dog."

Cattle, sheep, horses, and dogs constituted the basic wealth of the Sethar herders. By managing these animals they secured all they needed for their production and livelihood. Generally speaking, a family of three or four could maintain an independent existence if they had thirty or forty yak, forty or fifty sheep, three or four horses, and two or three dogs. Before 1950, however, only about 20 percent of the Sethar herders could exist independently. Most of them had very few livestock, or if they had cows they had no sheep, and if they had sheep they had no horses. Not many families had all of these things.

Today, more than fifty years later, amid the vagaries of the market economy, the Sethar herders have accepted currency, and the Renminbi has long since become legal tender. They use Renminbi to purchase cattle, horses, and sheep, as well as houses, clothing, *qingke* barley, flour, fruit, milk separators, rice, jewelry, bicycles, and even tractors and automobiles. Among these, such things as milk separators, rice, flour, and various types of fabrics have become indispensable articles in their production and livelihood. They wish that the cattle outside their tents would increase in quantity and quality, but to obtain the commodities that are not manufactured locally or that they themselves are unable to produce, they are obliged

every year to slaughter some of their cattle for sale, and their lives are increasingly dependent on the market. Furthermore, their exchanges no longer consist of barter trade. The markets in the county towns are paradises that they constantly frequent. Here, they sell meat, milk, wool, butter, hides, and various native produce, and buy production materials and articles of everyday use, Tleir basic wealth is no longer limited to livestock, but consists of a good deal more. Their increasing dependence on the market economy is taking them toward a new life.

Four Periods of Development

All livestock economies (meaning mainly grassland animal husbandry) consist of two most basic technical domains: (1) pastureland utilization, and (2) management of livestock. These two together constitute the entire process of animal husbandry. In this process, the Sethar herders have experienced three phases of development.

1. The Semi-Agricultural, Semipastoral Period

The Sethar herders claim that eighteen generations ago, their ancestors lived on the banks of the Do-khug River and engaged in partly agricultural, partly pastoral productive activities. According to historical records, this was toward the end of the Ming dynasty and beginning of the Qing. The Sethar herders call this the "La-Song" era. "La-Song" is the abbreviation for the names of two headmen-Lama Kyab and Song Je Kyab. It is said that the Washul tribe separated at the time into two groups, one of which, led by Lama Kyab, continued to engage in animal husbandry. The other, led by Song-Je-Kyab, learned agricultural production.

The Do-khug River is a tributary of the Dadu River'. The entire

river valley proceeds in a north-south directon. It is about twenty li wide and nearly three hundred li in length, and has a surface of 2,000 li. In its upper reaches is a natural pastureland with abundant water and grass. The lower reaches-a plain protected on all sides by trees and forests-present an ideal environment for both agriculture and animal husbandry. So why did the Sethar herders leave this place and migrate to the Sethar grassland? According to their legends, they had two reasons for doing so. The first is that they could no longer endure the Qing armies' oppression. The second is that agriculture could not provide a subsistence for animal husbandry. At the time, animal husbandry was conducted under the conditions of fixed settlement, and there were only pastures enough for two seasons-summer and winter. In winter, the livestock survived basically by grazing on the grassy hills around the fields and by being fed some fodder. As the number of livestock increased, however, the number of pastures were first limited by the amount of pastureland the tribe could use, which amounted to no more than 1,000 square li. Meanwhile, the number of livestock rose to several thousand, giving each head of livestock less than a square kilometer of pasturage and placing all excessive burden on the pastures. The winter pastures too, shrank every year as farmland expanded. Moreover, the crude farming tools were increasingly unable to provide the livestock with night and winter fodder. The result was that animal husbandry suffered major losses every year, and the shrinking number of livestock reduced the people to poverty. For the survival of both humans and livestock, the branch of the tribe that engaged in animal husbandry at first looked for pastures in the upper reaches of the Do-khug, but there were too many high mountains, deep rivers, and forests here and few usable pastures. Eventually, during the Yongzhen reign of the Qing dynasty, they found the broad Sethar pasture and thereafter completely gave up

their fixed mode of habitation, adopting a nomadic way of life in pursuit of pastures and water.

2. The Nomadic Period of Free Migration

In the early years after it migrated to the Sethar grassland, the Washul tribe consisted of only three subtribes with about sixty or seventy households, four or five hundred people, and two or three thousand livestock. The area of the grassland, however, surpassed twenty thousand square li, most of it uninhabited, so that there was a vast domain for the tribe's nomadic peregrinations. There was no need at the time for tribal leaders to seek special privileges with regard to the use of pastures, or for drawing up boundary lines among the various branch tribes. Nor were there armed conflicts over pastureland. People were free to pursue grass and water in all four seasons, for which reason this is called the "Period of Free Migration." On the other hand, due to the very low level of the productive forces at the time, livestock raising was completely dependent on and heavily dominated by the forces of nature. The pastures, in particular, which were utilized in a natural instead of artificial manner, were greatly affected by seasonal changes, the grass growing abundantly in summer and fall and withering away in winter and spring. The herders were not in the habit of putting away fodder for the winter, so that there were surpluses of grass in summer and severe shortages in winter and spring. This created a grave seasonal imbalance in nutrition for the livestock, manifested as "lively in summer, well-fed in autumn, emaciated in winter, and dead in spring." Every spring, many livestock became mere skeletons, large numbers of them would die if there was a snowstorm, and herders would lose everything they had. This indicated the fragility of the pastoral economy in its natural state. Many years of experience told

the Washul Sethar herders that sole reliance on a pastoral economy could not satisfy their needs. In those times, handicraft industries were poorly developed in Sethar society, industry and commerce were nonexistent, class divisions had not become obvious, and people were gathered in tribal groups in accordance with bloodline relationships. When animal husbandry suffered from natural disasters or could not produce enough, the herders depended on collective brigandage to supplement their needs. This sort of activity developed from an occasional means for maintaining survival into a sort of martial spirit among the tribes. Plunder became all important characteristic of the Sethar tribes' traditional way of life and even a major source of livelihood for some herders.

3. The Era of Boundary Marking Among the Tribes

According to Sethar folklore, this took place three generations ago, or in other words, in the years of Washul Kador, grandfather of Washul Rizin Den drub, the general headmnan of the Washul Sethar on the eve of Liberation. The Washul Sethar tribes had grown from the original three to more than fifty tribes. The local herders say that in Kador's years, the power of Washul Sethar was at its zenith, with the boundaries of Sethar extending from Qinghai's Rida in the north to the Luokema region of Luhuo in the south, divided among more than fifty tribes, with ten thousand Washul households in the region, a thousand outside the region, and a hundred thousand men and horses. This is, of course, braggadocio. But it is a fact that both the population and the number of tribes had increased considerably at that time. On the one hand, after five generations of growth, the original tribes of Washul Sethar had grown, their power gradually increased, and in particular contingent of courageous and well-trained warriors had emerged in the course of their plundering activities, so that many

neighboring livestock-raising tribes joined them. On the other hand, many outside livestock-raising tribes were attracted by the broad expanses of sparsely inhabited grasslands with their abundant grass and water. For example, the Qu-cang tribe were outsiders who had moved to Sethar five generations earlier. The Yue-chong tribe, also known as the Awu Yue-chong tribe, whose ancestral lands were at Xing Long, had also moved to Sethar five generations earlier. The development of the native tribes with the addition of large numbers of outside tribes caused a sharp rise in population and the number of livestock in Sethar. According to estimates by local headmen there were at least a hundred thousand livestock at that time. There began to be an insufficiency of pastures and a need to divide them up. But armed conflicts arose among the tribes because of unfair distribution. By the time of Washul Kador, entire grasslands had been basically divided among the tribes. All the grassy hills and river valleys had been occupied by the fifty or more tribes, and a situation of division, mutual antagonism, and constant armed conflict emerged among them. As time went by, there were constant disputes over the issue of "prohibited domains" on the pasturelands, even among subtribes within the same big tribe. All tribes set up fixed domains and not a single unoccupied pasture remained on the vast grassland.

The fixing of permanent grassland domains restricted the people's nomadic way of life, and they passed over from the second period of free, nomadic cattle grazing over large areas to semifixed settlement and cattle grazing over smaller areas. Fixed seasonal pasturages-winter, spring, summer, and fall-started to emerge among the tribes. Each tribe began to migrate from one seasonal pasture to another in an organized, planned, disciplined, and scheduled manner in order to protect the seasonal pastures from being trampled by livestock. In line with the topography of the Sethar grassland, one tribe usually occupied

one mountain valley. Their livestock were grazed on the summits of the grassy hills in summer and fall and returned into the valley in winter and spring to take shelter from the cold winds. This sort of limited-scope, rotation-by-seasons grazing obliged them to set up a series of strict regulations for managing the pasturelands: (1) movements to other pastures had to proceed in a unified manner; (2) no cross-boundary cattle grazing was permitted on the seasonal pastures, and violators were fined one yak; (3) every two weeks, patrols or sentries were sent out to prevent outsiders from invading the tribes' pastures or cattle from neighboring tribes crossing boundaries; (4) to fully utilize the pastures, the livestock were grazed in fixed sequence-on hilltops before valleys, and shady slopes before sunlit slopes; (5) various rukor (livestock corrals) had to be at least several hundred paces apart so that the livestock would not be overly concentrated and damage the pastures. This management system ensured full utilization of the pastures, but was restricted by the grazing schedules.

The Sethar herders' seasonal grazing periods were basically the same for all tribes, as follows:

Summer pastures: June to August

Fall pastures: September and October

Winter pastures: November to the following May

Winter and spring pastures accounted for 40 percent of the Sethar pastoral regions, while summer and fall pastures accounted for 60 percent. However, as far as time was concerned, grazing in the spring and winter pastures lasted seven months and the herders' residence in these pastures took place just when the grass was withered. The result was that livestock suffered from lack of fodder in winter and spring. To resolve this problem, the Sethar herders began to lay aside winter fodder, starting more than a hundred years ago, and developed the

habit of planting *yuan gen* on small areas of their winter pastures. Nevertheless, the tendency was for the constant increases of livestock to create greater shortages of pastures. The fixing of permanent pastoral regions and the increase in the number of livestock unavoidably came into conflict, and such contradictions often culminated in the form of armed clashes that temporarily resolved matters. The tribe with the most men, horses, and guns could expand its pastures, or vice versa. This is one reason there were so many guns in the Sethar region before 1950. Statistics indicated that there were no fewer than 5, 000 firearms in Sethar before 1950. Due to the increase in pasture disputes, feuding tribes also increased and armed conflict became more frequent. Several tens of armed clashes over pasture disputes among the tribes took place neatly every year. Thus the characteristics of this period were: a plethora of forbidden pasture regions arising among the tribes, endless disputes and armed conflict, damage to the development of animal husbandry, and impoverishment of the local people. The grasslands also began to deteriorate because of overgrazing and indiscriminate grazing. These characteristics indicate that the disputes and armed clashes over pastures in the Sethar grassland were the political and military expression and outcome of the contradiction posed by fixed pasturelands and the constantly growing number of livestock.

4. Toward the Period of Commercialization

In the last fifty or more years, the number of livestock has continued to increase, pastures have become increasingly scarce, the contradiction between pasturage and livestock has remained acute, and disputes and armed conflict over pastureland still take place. However, changes have occurred in the form and targets of the disputes and clashes and in the way they have been resolved. First,

the disputes now take place between villages, production brigades, townships, counties, and even provinces, instead of between tribes, but the frequency of armed conflict has greatly decreased, and the method of resolution primarily takes the form of negotiations between local governments and arbitration by higher authorities. However, in the long term, and to resolve the fundamental issues, one must reiterate that there are two basic problems: the insufficiency and deterioration of pastures and overgrazing. Like all Tibetan regions, the Sethar pastoral region began in the 1970s and 1980s to conduct grassland basic construction. At the same time, along with the development of the market economy, the commercialization and slaughter of livestock have constantly increased in an effort to reduce the number of livestock and increase the amount of grass growing on the grassland, thereby resolving the contradiction between pastures and livestock. However, the herders' traditional reluctance to slaughter livestock and the objective deterioration of the pastures make the resolution of that contradiction a difficult and long-term task. Nonetheless, when we returned to Sethar in 2001, we were happy to note that the "three complementary constructions" had produced initial results. The "three complementary constructions" are meant to provide people with permanent housing, livestock with barns and pens, and pastures with fences. This should be seen as a great change.

The Traditional System of Animal Husbandry

Techniques

The process of animal husbandry is a complex process of animal reproduction. Livestock differ from land and grain in that they are live things that require human attention, care, and protection, as well as domestication, if they are to reproduce in large numbers. Thus,

animal husbandry is a highly technical form of production. It also has its own rules.

Fattening and Breeding

The development of all living things originates in their seeds, and the first step in animal husbaudry is breeding. However, the precondition for breeding is fleshing out. Breeding only proceeds well if the livestock are well fleshed. This is the same as reproduction in humans. Parents produce healthy children only if they themselves are healthy. The Sethar herders have accumulated abundant experience in fleshing out and breeding. According to them, there are three kinds of livestock flesh: watery flesh, meaty flesh, and fatty flesh. In their experience, the time for livestock to acquire watery flesh is from the last half of May to the end of June. In this period, the pasturage is tender and fresh, and the livestock like it. But because the grass contains a good deal of moisture and has not yet generated abundant nutrition, the flesh it produces is called watery flesh, or puffy flesh. Watery flesh must be built up, but not too much, otherwise the livestock are likely to have diarrhea and lose weight. The way to do this is to set the livestock out to graze late and bring them in early. In July and early August, the pasturage has matured and is rich with nutrition. Livestock put on weight very fast when they eat such grass, and so the flesh generated is called "meaty flesh," or "true flesh." Great efforts must be given to putting on such flesh, and the way to do it is to set out the livestock early, bring them in late, and thus fatten them up. Between the middle of August and in September, the pasturage flowers and bears seed. Its nutrition is most abundant and livestock love it because it is most tasty. Livestock also put on weight most rapidly in fall because the weather is most clement, with suitable precipitation and gentle winds. The flesh they put on now contains the

most fat and is called "fatty flesh." The livestock should not only be put out early and brought in late, but should also be set out to graze at night because there are few harmful beasts around at this time, and no wolves.

Livestock breeding is a major component of animal husbandry. Because the breeding technique determines the eventual value of the livestock, herders place great importance on it. The first step in breeding is strain selection, which includes both male and female livestock. In the case of oxen, for example, the bull should be tall and sturdy and not too docile, and should have some experience in mating. However, very few bulls fulfill all these conditions, and there generally are at most one or two breed bulls in each Rukor. Some entire tribes have only a few such breed bulls, the reason being that there is not much use for such bulls other than propagation. Breed bulls are not used for transportation or for riding; this is to protect them and conserve their energy. At the same time these bulls are quite wild and difficult to manage because they are never harnessed or bridled, so the herders prohibit putting breed bulls to other uses. Generally speaking, the breed bulls in a *rukor* are public property and everyone is responsible for feeding and protecting them. Whereas it is in the nature of animals to mate spontaneously, the herders' duty is to promote selective mating, but that is difficult when there are large numbers of livestock. So, aside from strain selection, the retention of breed animals is one of the measures for controlling spontaneous mating. The livestock are inspected from early on to determine which should be retained as breed stock. Inspected are the animal's weight, flesh, vocalizations, speed, genitals, hair color, head, and tail. After three years of observation, those bulls that are suitable for retention as breed stock are not gelded. All the rest of the bulls are gelded to prevent indiscriminate mating. Female livestock are selected

for maintaining the strain. Generally speaking, the herders do their best to have the cows that produce the most milk and the most offspring impregnated. The way to do this is to pay especial attention to fattening them and feeding them extra amounts of salt. Before 1950, the Sethar herders paid very little attention to selecting sheep, and hardly any selection of breed rams was done.

Due to the climatic characteristics of the Scthar grassland, it is most important to regulate the mating period of each type of livestock. If the mating takes place too early, the young livestock will be born in winter or early spring when the weather is cold and there is little grass, resulting in a low survival rate among the newborn. But if the mating occurs too late, the mother's lactation period is affected and the herders' livelihood is placed in difficulty when the cows produce a few months' less milk. Livestock must first go into heat before mating, and this has to do with the environment. Generally speaking, they are more likely to go into heat when the weather is mild and sunny and there is plenty of grass and water. In other words, they go into heat when they have plenty of good fodder and a calm and peaceful environment that does not upset them. In such circumstances, both male and female livestock are likely to go into heat. Hence, the herders wait for the livestock's normal period of heat, then feed them extra amounts of salt, and choose a clear, sunny day to move them to a new pasture. Once in a new pasture with luxuriant vegetation, both the male and female livestock can no longer restrain themselves. They chase one another, great excitement ensues, and the herders attain their objective. The herders must see to it that as many female livestock as possible conceive, and reduce the rate of nonimpregnation (nonimpregnated milk cows). But there must always be some nonimpregnated cows, because they normally produce a calf every two years, and if many are impregnated the first year, there will be fewer

impregnated cows the next year. This is all the more so in regions with low standards of animal husbandry

Before 1950, very little crossbreeding was done in the Sethar region. Apart from religious reasons, this had to do with the economic blockade. The Sethar herders breed *pian niu* (yak/cow hybrids) for the purpose of commerce because they are worth 50 percent more than yak, but the blockade prevented such commerce. And although the *pian niu* calve earlier, produce more milk, and are stronger, their short hair reduces their resistance to cold. Also, the *pian niu* are not a self-propagating livestock species and, unlike yak, they cannot carry on their lineage from generation to generation.

Grazing

Among all the animal-husbandry skills in the Sethar pastoral areas, grazing takes first place. This is because the primary function of human activity in animal husbandry is to have livestock eat grass so as to produce meat, milk, and hides for human use. Grazing serves to solve the problem of livestock eating grass.

(1) To ensure all livestock eat more and better grass, one must consider such factors as the quality of the grass, the soil, climatic changes, seasons, water, and sunshine. Thus it is not easy to be a good herder.

To find out about the various skills used in grazing livestock, I visited a sixty-year-old herder of the Chos-Kor tribe. Her experience, as she related it to me, may be summed up as follows: graze in non-sunlit places in spring, in sunlit places in winter, on the mountain slopes in fall, and on the hilltops in summer. That is to say, the characteristics of grazing change with the seasons. Where terrain is concerned, grazing is done on hills and mountain tops in summer when the weather is clear and sunny, and in valleys during the winter

to find shelter from cold and wind. Where herd formation is concerned, the livestock are allowed to scatter like stars in the sky so that they can graze and gambol to their hearts' content. In winter, the animals are kept in single file so as to conserve the pastures and guard against attacks by jackals and wolves.

Why graze in non-sunlit hill slopes in spring? Livestock are tiding over a crisis in spring. All of them are emaciated and weak after the winter, so the imporant thing is to conserve fat and avoid over exertion. The purpose of grazing them on non-sunlit slopes is to prevent them from "pursuing the green." (In spring, when green grass has just begun to sprout, livestock tend to run toward it.) This is most likely to make livestock expend too much energy and lose weight as well as cause them to suffer from bloated bellies, diarrhea, and other digestive ailments. This situation is illustrated by the saying that "sheep starve from pursuing the green." When grazed on non-sunlit slopes, the livestock see no green grass and do not yearn for it, because green grass first emerges on sunlit slopes and only later on non-sunlit slopes. From the angle of weather, grazing is best done facing the wind in winter, because the livestock retain warmth better when the wind presses their hair against their bodies. As for the time expended on grazing, the general rule is to go out early and come back late so that the livestock can eat more grass. But this is not absolute. Grazing time depends on the season. In summer and autumn, the livestock may be set out to graze early. But if set out early in winter and spring, the morning frost is harmful to the animals' digestive systems. Pregnant livestock, in particular, are very likely to abort if they eat grass with frost on it. Thus they are set out to graze after the sun has melted the frost.

(2) Another important characteristic of Sethar grazing is the seasonality of the migrations. The scale and scope of such migrations

depend on the size of the pastures and the herds. Generations of experience in migrating from pasture to pasture has formed a number of regularities in seasonal patterns. These include estimates of the grass cover, knowledge about the nutritional value of pasturage for various kinds of livestock, investigations of the growth of water grasses, determination of the time for the various seasonal migrations, and so forth. We shall only explain the determination of the time for seasonal migrations to illustrate the Sethar herders' knowledge.

The herders' most crucial time was when "a thread of green appears along the riverbanks and the plains are covered with white." Their livestock were emaciated and very weak, and large numbers of them collapsed and died if a heavy snowfall covered the ground lot a few days, leaving the herders destitute and obliged to rent other people's livestock. Hence, this was a time that determined the destiny of production for the entire district. The herders went so far as to enclose the livestock in their own tents and feed them their tea and grain, leaving themselves to suffer from hunger and cold. If they had stores of forage, they preferred not to set the livestock out to graze, because any movement at this time was harmful to the exhausted animals. For this reason migrations were strictly taboo at such times, unless disputes arose over pastures. Before 1950, collection of winter forage for animal husbandry was done only on a small scale in the Sethar region, and the stores would be used in early spring only to feed livestock that were incapable of finding grass for themselves under the snow. The rest of the livestock were sent out to graze nearby. But the herders were helpless when there was heavy snowfall. The first seasonal migration began when "green covers the plains but the hilltops are still white." But such migrations covered only short distances and proceeded slowly, because this was the peak period for birthing young livestock and large livestock were very thin and weak.

The herders remained busy from morning till night, tending to adult livestock and delivering newborn animals. At night they slept with the herds to protect them from jackals and wolves. The second seasonal migration took place when "cuckoos call many times and hilltops and valleys are covered in green." This was a long-distance migration, and grazing took place on hilltops, leaving the valleys and plains to the calves and young lambs. The third migration occurred when "snow pigs are busy putting away food for winter and the tips of grasses whistle in the wind." This was the busiest time for the herders. Livestock were put out to graze day and night. The fattened animals attracted thieves and wolves, so the herders had to stay close to the herds at all times and keep a sharp lookout. And "when *the bao shi* star emerges, go promptly to the winter quarters." The four seasonal migrations described above show that the Sethar herders possessed some preliminary astronomical and calendrical knowledge-knowledge that was developed to fix the seasons for the needs of animal husbandry. There are many other examples, such as: "When the *niao ban* star rises over the western mountains, set the livestock out for spring grazing"; "Rain falls a few days after the clouds form in strips like *hada* scarves"; "When one looks eastward from one's lent at dawn and sees clusters of strange animal-shaped clouds, hail will certainly fall in the afternoon"; and "The calves are born when there is no more ice in the water." These sayings reflect to a certain extent the objective regularities of the grasslands' weather changes, and as such are very useful to the Tibetan herdsmen. Although there are no written records, this knowledge has been passed from generation to generation in the form of sayings and proverbs, and fully demonstrates the Sethar herders' intelligence in their observation of seasonal and climatic changes.

Processing and Manufacture of Animal products Mainly by Means of Manual Work

Before 1950, self-sufficient production formed the main portion of the Scthar herders' economy. They themselves processed and made most of what they lived in, wore, and used. My investigations show that self-made products constituted more than 80 percent of the Sethar herders' total consumption in the past. Such self-sufficiency took place in household units. All things needed by the family were manufactured or processed by means of division of labor among its members. The fact that the Sethar herders were able to survive twenty years of economic blockade had a lot to do with their self-sufficiency. The Sethar herders processed animal products chiefly by manual means, without the use of the machinery. The following are descriptions of four aspects of self-sufficient production-food, housing, clothing, and daily necessities.

Apart from meat, the Sethar herders subsist mainly on milk products, especially yak butter. Before 1950 their implements for making yak butter were very simple. Most people used a sort of oval leather bag that, after being filled with milk, was shaken and slapped. After a while, the butter would separate from the milk. This was then extracted by hand, squeezed dry, and directly put in sheep's stomachs or yak-leather bags for storage. Before 1950 a working housewife spent most of the day making yak butter. After 1950, milk separators that can be used by both men and women appeared, and yak butter is made in only an hour or so. The curds left over from making yak butter became cheese. The milk was first heated and brought to a boil, so that it congealed like soy-milk dregs. Then it was placed in a basket, drained of sour water, laid out to dry on a piece of

wool cloth, and then, hand-rubbed into fine pellets, the finer the better. After drying in the sun, it became a coarse powder that was an indispensable adjunct to the *tsamba* eaten by the herders. Some milk was also used every day to make yogurt. This was usually made of milk left over from producing yak butter. It was heated and poured into a wooden bucket, then allowed to ferment with the addition of yeast. Only well-to-do herders made yogurt out of milk that had not been used to make yak butter. Yogurt was a common drink among the herders and was consumed in place of grain products. Lunch and supper consisted for the most part of curds and yogurt to economize on yak butter and *tsamba*. Yogurt is both easy to digest and helps digestion. Churning yak butter, milking cows, and making cheese was woman's work. Generally, a woman could churn 200 catties of milk per day and produce about fifteen catties of yak butter. The greatest portion of the herders' handicraft industry went to the tents they lived in. The first step in making a tent was to card the yak hair and twist it into ropes. They twisted ropes when engaged in work that did not need their hands. For example, a herder twisted ropes when he was tending livestock. The herders are so adept at this that they can twist ropes while walking and chatting. Their hands are seldom idle, and they even regard twisting ropes as a sort of relaxation. The second process was to weave the ropes into a wool fabric. This, too, was woman's work, and a woman could weave a piece of wool fabric one foot wide and fifteen feet long in a day. The time for weaving was in early spring, before the livestock began to produce milk. Once the milking period started, the women were busy from morning till night making yak butter and curds and had no time to do any weaving. One hundred and fifty catties of yak hair were needed to weave a medium-sized tent.

For convenience of transportation during migrations, the tents

were generally made in two or four large sections that could be linked up or quickly taken apart. Once taken apart they were loaded and transported by yak. Although the manufacturing processes were all performed by hand and the weaving was done by primitive methods, the filaments were very closely woven and the texture of the fabrics was quite fine, so that they were basically rain-proof. The sheepskin coats worn by the herdsmen all went through two processes-tanning and tailoring. The tanning was a simple and primitive process. The sheepskin was rubbed with sour milk to which salt was added. After a period of time, the remaining flesh and fat was scraped off with knives, and the sheepskin was kneaded after it dried. During the kneading, it was dampened with sour milk once or twice every day, then sticks with toothed wheels [sic] were used to scrape off any remaining fat or bits of yogurt and were sheepskin was kneaded again. The process by which yak hides were tanned was basically the same, but the hides were first soaked for a long time in water and then scraped clean of hair before being kneaded. The kneading had to be done with much force, so both hands and feet were used. Sometimes the hides were placed at the entrance of the tents so that people who came in and went out trod on them, making them supple. Kneading hides was basically men's work. The quality requirement was that the kneaded hide should become as white as paper, and ideally as soft as cotton cloth. Finally, the sewing was done by herders who were skilled at doing so. Each tribe usually had three or four such skilled tailors, all of them men since there were very few women tailors in the pastoral regions. The process for making felt out of sheep's wool for rain capes, saddle blankets, and seating pads was even simpler. Almost no equipment or tools were used. The wool was first carded and then spread out on a sheet of tanned ox hide, after which it was pounded with any kind of stick until the wool was fragmented and

became a sort of floss. This was spread out in even layers, mouthfuls of tea were sprayed on it, and then the wool and ox hide were rolled up together in a tube and rolled back and forth by hand on the ground. The number of times the tube was rolled was counted off in a sing-song manner. After being rolled several hundred times under pressure, the wool became slabs of felt that could be sewn into rain capes, seating pads, and other articles of daily use.

The processing of animal products, as described above, shows that the Sethar herders' production techniques were basically quite primitive before Liberation. Since most of the things they used for food, clothing, and habitation were self-made, and every household possessed people familiar with these techniques, a self-sufficient economy took shape-one that proceeded with the household as the basic unit, received assistance from the *rukor*, and needed no outside help. Practically every herdsman was a handicraft worker. So Sethar was not without a handicrafts industry, but the industry was dispersed to each household. This handicrafts industry was very closely dependent on animal hushandicrafts-indeed, virtually inseparable from it-and thus there were basically no independent handicraft workers in Sethar before Liberation. There were a number of artisans who specialized in making wool coats, Tibetan boots, and saddle blankets, but most of them were simultaneously engaged in animal husbandry. Hence no market took shape, nor was there an independent merchant stratum.

After fifty years of development, every Sethar household is now using milk separators to make yak butter, and it would be very hard to find households that use the traditional sheepskin bags for making it. Most of the stoves, pots, pans, and other cooking utensils in herders' homes now come from the market.

Marital Payments: The Case of Tibetan Nomads

(with Hai Miao)

Among most ethnic groups of the world, marriage is associated with economic exchange which customarily takes the form of bridewealth or dowry. Bridewealth is a gift of money or goods given to the bride's relatives by the groom or his kin, whereas dowry involves goods or money given by the bride's family to the bride, the groom, or the groom's family.

Although discussions of bridewealth and dowry are long-standing, some questions remain. For example, why should bridewealth be more common in horticultural and pastoral societies, while dowry is more common in agricultural European and Asian societies? Jack Goody (1976) has theorized that the nature of marriage payments depends on the extent of women's contributions to the domestic economy, and that such contributions are more substantial under horticultural and pastoral regimes. Moreover, he explains dowry as a kind of inheritance system for women, paid out in advance of their parent's deaths.

Here we will utilize firsthand materials based on our own field research among Tibetan pastoral nomads, together with published data

on these populations, to test Goody's theory. We will consider whether his explanation accurately represents the circumstances of Tibetan nomadic communities and whether marital payments indeed relate to the level of women's economic contributions to their families. Finally, we will consider whether there are any relationships between marital transactions and inheritance patterns.

Field Study on Marital Payments

Our research was conducted in the summer of 1994 with Tibetan nomads in Serthar County, Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, in northwest Sichuan Province. The county has an area of 12, 185. 4 square km with a total population of 33, 649, 93 percent (31, 357) of whom are Tibetans, according to 1990 census figures. The nomadic way of life has been followed for centuries. Traditionally, this pastoral area is known as Washul Serthar (Washul being the most influential clan there).

Traditional anthropological methods such as participant observation, in-depth interviewing and questionnaires provided the data utilized in this article.

Our research on marital payments was conducted among fifty-four nomadic tentholds within three different Tsho-Ba (local groups of a territory) in three different Xiang (a local township administrative unit), chosen to represent different levels of wealth and experience of access to roads.

Among Sethar nomads, the exchange of gifts has been a very important part of the betrothal and marriage process, as in other Tibetan pastoral areas. Bridewealth is paid to a bride or her family before the wedding ceremony takes place, and a dowry is brought by the bride with her to the new family. In the local dialect, dowry is

called bag-skal and refers to the gifts or property given by parents to their daughter at her marriage. Bridewealth is called Magskal, meaning gifts given to the girl's parents by the future husband or his family, or property the man brings when a Magpa marriage is introduced. (Magpa refers to the change of residence of the man to his wife's family's tent.) The word Skal means "a share."

According to the traditions of Sethar nomads, when children marry and move out, the family calculates what its property includes and gives an equal or fair share to the marrying child. Each child takes his or her share of the family property into his or her own marriage. If a person is from a wealthier family, then the share of property that he or she brings to the marriage will be greater than average.

Marital payments usually include tools of production and other necessities such as tents, clothes, household goods, and so forth, but cash gifts are seldom given because people do not have very much of it. Livestock is given priority as a marital payment, since domestic animals are essential to work and life, and the quantity of livestock directly reflects a nomad's wealth. So, whether poor or rich, the parents try to provide animals for their children upon marriage.

Traditionally, in the Sethar area, large amounts of gifts for marriage were prepared and provided by the groom's family, but our findings suggest that the bride's family provides more than the groom's. There is also a difference between the quantity of livestock provided by the man's family and the woman's (Table 1). The bride's family, furthermore, tends to provide more grain and tea, on average, and more clothing.

Customarily, tents should be provided by the man's family, but the woman's parents are also willing to send a tent as part of the dowry if the groom is too poor to afford it. In six cases of the thirteen

neolocal marriages we studied, the husband brought the tent. In two cases, tents were brought into the marriage by the woman. Also, one couple purchased a tent after they married. Four households provided no information on this issue.

Marital payments often include sheepskin coats and wool coats. Because Sethar is located in an area where the average altitude is over 4,000 meters, the climate is harsh, and the difference of temperature between day and night is extremely sharp. Therefore, the nomad's basic garments, a sheepskin robe and a wool robe, are very popular marital gifts. They are worn as garments during the day and used as quilts at night. Our data show that twenty women received such garments as part of their marital share, while only nine men's shares included such garments. Expensive ornaments, such as headdresses, necklaces, belts, and other jewelry are also included in the dowry. In general, these ornaments are usually kept by the woman herself during her marriage and not by her husband or his parents. Later, if the marriage fails through no fault of the woman's, or if, as the local people say, it is a "reasonable divorce," then the wife returns to her kin with all these ornaments, just as guns go with the man. However, if the marriage fails and the wife is to blame, then the husband will acquire all of this jewelry into his own possession.

Table 1a Marital Payments Among Serthar Nomads (Bridewealth)

Household Number	Livestock	Grain & Tea	Tent	Clothes	Household Items	Total Bridewealth①
1	2943	0	0	0	0	2943
2	2500	0	0	0	0	2500
3	1000	0	0	0	0	1000
4	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	4000	10	5000	1100	0	10110
9	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	5000	234	2500	510	100	8344
14	1500	0	5000	400	849	7749
15	2300	502	5000	910	394	9106
16	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	0	0	0	0	0	0
18	8450	0	0	0	0	8450
19	2500	402	0	800	871	4573
20	6860	1102	5000	500	708	14170
21	6090	0	5000	400	0	11490
22	5500	200	5000	620	94	11414
23	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean Amount	2114.91	106.52	1413.04	227.83	131.13	3993.43

① Items that enter into marital payments, such as cattle, food, tents, clothes, and so forth, are calculated in RMB, according to their 1994 prices on the Serthar market.

Table 1b Marital Payments Among Tibetan Nomads (Dowry)

Household Number	Livestock	Grain &Tea	Tent	Clothes	Household Items	Orna-ments	Total Dowry
1	2943	0	0	0	0	0	2943
2	2000	40	0	400	30	330	2800
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	500	0	0	0	0	0	500
5	2000	0	0	0	0	0	2000
6	1500	1038	0	0	30	0	2568
7	1000	200	0	400	0	0	1600
8	2500	47	0	400	38	0	2985
9	500	0	0	0	0	0	500
10	5500	604	0	1310	15	0	7429
11	3770	51	5000	400	127	0	9348
12	5450	0	0	510	0	4040	10000
13	7200	200	2500	910	56	0	10866
14	4090	202	0	800	0	2620	7712
15	8000	100	0	910	56	0	9066
16	17900	0	0	1300	0	6400	25600
17	10400	1208	0	1310	0	8190	21108
18	10450	0	0	0	0	0	10450
19	14500	502	5000	400	389	1188	21979
20	6770	1408	0	1200	0	622	10000
21	16670	0	0	1600	0	0	18270
22	22500	0	0	0	400	2050	24950
23	10400	0	0	0	30	0	10430
Mean Amount	6806.22	243.48	543.48	515.22	50.91	1106.09	9265.39

The kinds and amounts of marital payments in the cooperative and commune era (1960-1981) are distinctively different from those given after 1981. The first difference concerns the giving of livestock. During the cooperative and commune periods, the average number of animals per household given as dowry and bridewealth was two and four, respectively. However, these numbers increased to an average of twenty-two and eight, respectively, after the introduction of the responsibility system, which started in 1982.

The second difference concerns the types of goods given as marital payments. During the cooperative and commune periods, marital payments usually included the basic necessities of life, such as livestock, grain, clothes, tea, and so on. Since 1982, however, marital payments have not only included those things, but also some goods that are considered luxury items, such as sewing machines, wool blankets, and the like. Also, before 1982, jewelry was seldom given in dowry, but since 1982, jewelry has become a common gift.

The third difference concerns the cash value of marital gifts. The value of marital payments averaged RMB 1,766 per dowry and RMB 1,839 per bridewealth during the cooperative and commune periods. But those averages increased to RMB 14,086 per dowry and RMB 5,378 per bridewealth after 1982 (Table 2). That means cash payments were eight times higher for dowries and three times higher for bridewealth after 1982, according to the value of these same goods in 1994.

Table 2 Increases in Marital Payments over Time

Time	Total Bridewealth	Total Dowry	Year of Marriage	Postmarital Residence
Cooperative	2943	2943	1963	N
and	2500	2800	1964	N
Commune	1000	0	1965	M
Periods	0	500	1967	P
	0	2000	1973	N
(1961-1981)	0	2568	1974	P
	0	1600	1975	N
	10110	2985	1977	P
	0	500	1977	N
Mean Payment	1839	1766		
Open-up	0	7429	1983	P
policy	0	9348	1985	N
	0	10000	1985	P
(1982-present)	8344	10866	1985	N
	7749	7712	1986	N
	9106	9066	1988	N
	0	25600	1988	P
	0	21108	1988	P
	8450	10450	1989	N
	4573	21979	1989	N
	14170	10000	1989	N
	11490	18270	1990	N
	11414	24950	1991	N
	0	10430	1993	P
Mean Payment	5378	14086		

Notes: N = neolocal postmarital residence; M = matrilocal marriage; and P = patrilocal marriage.

Why the sharp increase in marital payments between the periods prior to and after 1982? The answer is simple. First, during the cooperative and commune periods, most animals and productive implements were owned by the commune. Nomad households were able to keep one milking cow of the yak species (Dri) per person and one horse for every two people as Kashul (Kashul is the minimum number of animals required to provide basic subsistence). When children married out, they were able to take only their share of Kashul and clothes. However, larger families had more Kashul animals. By pooling their resources, these larger families might have been able to get by on less "family Kashur' in order to provide more animals to their out-marrying children. This would be the only way a family could give animals as part of marital payments to their children.

Second, a work-point system was practiced during the cooperative and commune periods. All pastoral tasks such as milking, shearing, and so forth were assigned a work-point value from one to ten. Work points were awarded each day depending on the nature and amount of each person's work. These work points would evenually be converted into a monetary figure, from which the nomads could "buy" basic necessities at the end of the year at a large distribution of goods. Each nomad could obtain mutton, yak meat, butter, grain, skins, and other necessities by "cashing in" work points they had earned. Thus, whenever a matrilocal, patrilocal, or neolocal marriage was engaged in, the couple would bring their work points with them to the marriage. In consequence, during the period when the work-point system was used, fewer goods (in kind) were given as marital payment because of the share to be received in the more intangible work points.

Our data also show that the amount and kinds of marital payments largely depend upon the economic background of the individual's natal family. For instance, households that are rich in livestock provide

large marital payments, while those that are poor in livestock provide lower payments.

In the Sethar area, women enjoy the same rights of property as men. This is evidenced through the method employed in dividing property in the event of divorce. If there is no child, each party takes back the property that he or she had brought into the marriage. But if a divorce involves a third party (e. g., if one spouse is involved in an extramarital affair), the spouse involved must pay out a certain amount of his or her property to the other. If no children are involved and the husband marries again, he must pay the former wife mossier (a compensation fee). Paying mossier has been a unique cultural feature in the Sethar area. Property acquired after the marriage should be divided equally among all family members (both spouses and any children) in the event of a divorce. The family tent may even be torn apart, with each family member taking his or her own share.

Research Data of Other Field Workers

Another set of data derived from comparative studies shows that our findings on marital payments are universal in other nomadic areas, and also call Goody's theory into question. In the Golog nomadic area, male and female siblings within a family enjoy equal inheritance rights, the only difference being that the female's inheritance takes the form of a dowry which she takes to another tenthold at marriage. If she divorces, she is entitled to the full dowry she brought to the marriage, as well as her equal share of the rest of the family property (as it is divided equally among the spouses and each child). For example, if the tenthold has increased its livestock holdings, she is entitled to a share of that incremental increase, for through her role as tent mistress, she has contributed to its prosperity (Ekvall 1968, 28).

In the southern nomadic area of Qinghai Lake, there is

equipartition of livestock between sons if they move away from their tent of birth after marriage. A daughter, if she leaves her natal tent at marriage, is likely to receive only clothes, jewelry, and a horse. If she is permitted to bring a *magpa* in (to bring a husband into her natal family), she will have a right to share in the livestock of her natal household (Clarke 1992, 402-403).

Similarly, among the Songpan nomadic communities of the Kham area, all outmarrying children, whether sons or daughters, receive what must be considered a dowry at the time of their marriage. This dowry is less than a full share of their family's property. For example, parents prepare only clothes and jewelry for the outmarrying daughters and provide only a skin coat, a riding horse, and a rifle as gifts for their son if he moves to his wife's family's tent or into his own tent. However, in the latter event, he assumes the inheritance rights of his wife's total property (Qu 1987, 200-209).

Conclusion

In Sethar and the other nomadic regions cited above, the productive technol ogy and the economic contributions of women are virtually identical. Women do the milking, churning, cooking, collecting dung for fuel, fetching water, taking care of the tents, and so forth. They are valued not merely as childbearers, but also as an important part of the labor force. The women in these populations make far greater contributions toward the subsistence economy of their society than the men (see Gelek 1984, 68).

According to Goody, in such societies, bridewealth should be more prevalent than dowry. Yet, the data that we collected show that women tend to receive more in dowry than men do in bridewealth. When a married couple resides with the bride's parents or groom's parents, only the in-marrying spouse brings a marital share. The

partner who stays in the parental tent brings nothing special, but instead holds the right to inherit his or her parents' property at their death. Thus because patrilocal marriages occur more commonly than matrilocal ones (eight cases of patrilocal to one of matrilocal marriage in our sample), dowry is more commonplace. However, even in cases of neolocal postmarital residence, dowries tend to be more substantial than bridewealth. We can see this when patrilocal and matrilocal marriages are excluded from the calculations in Table 2. Dowry totaled an average of RMB 1,969 during the cooperative and commune periods, while bridewealth totaled an average of RMB 1,089. In more recent years, dowry in neolocal marriages has totaled an average of RMB 13,627, while bridewealth totaled an average of RMB 8,366. Thus, in instances of patrilocal or matrilocal marriage, the marital payments are actually replaced by or become equivalent to inheritance, when children remain in their parents' tents and then take them over after their death. Thus we find together with the transmission of property at marriage, full inheritance of property by women as well as by men (Goody 1976, 34).

We note that there are geographical subcultural differences in marital payments in the different nomadic areas. In Sethar, marital payments are given to either bride or groom, but none to either of their families. In Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai province, nomads give jewelry for the bride, plus bridewealth consisting of a milking dri for her mother and a horse for her father (Xu 1994, 219). Similarly, in the Ngari and Nagchu pastoral areas of western Tibet, the groom's family must also send dri to the bride's mother as a "compensation fee" for the labor spent in raising her daughter. Moreover, if the couple chooses to live alone, apart from either set of parents, both families will provide yak hair to make a tent for them (Gelek et al. 1993, 185-86). This is just one example of how marital payments are greatly influenced by the local traditional

culture.

Economic background has always been taken into consideration when marriage is negotiated. Up to the present, most economic activities in Tibetan pastoral areas have been undertaken by the family. A family is not only a consanguineous kinship group and reproductive unit whose members fight against unexpected disasters together; it is also the elementary production and consuming unit of the society. Therefore the family can be considered as an efficient "insurance company." In such a society marriage is very important. The choice of a marriage partner not only affects the reputation of a family, but affects its economic life as well.

The subsistence of children after their marriage partially depends on investments from both natal families. This is quite different from urban families that support themselves on salaries. In Tibetan pastoral areas the market economy is underdeveloped, population migration is slow, and the people are geographically isolated from the modern world. Marital payments are, clearly, the initial capital for newly married couples. With the development of a market economy, urbanization, and industrialization, more and more children will no doubt leave their families and engage in paid labor, and such incomes will lay a foundation for them to live independently, making them reluctant to rely on their families. In these circumstances, the economic functions of the family will decrease, making economic considerations at marriage less important. Marital payments may be changed as well.

Our data suggest that local cultural traditions, the economic background of an individual's family, postmarital residence, and the bilateral inheritance system of the nomads are the major fac-tors influencing patterns of marital payments among Tibetan nomads. Thus we find that Goody's theory about marital payments is overly simplistic, since it does not fit the complexities of this case. We also

call for further research in different Tibetan nomadic areas in order to discover the sources of cultural differences in marital transactions, where productive technology and the economic contributions of women seem virtually identical.

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The Washul Sethar: A Nomadic Community of Eastern Tibet

Introduction

In traditional Tibetan cultural geography, Tibet is divided into three regions: West Tibet or Upper Tibet, called To Ngari Korsum in Tibetan; the middle area of Tibet—u-Tsang (Bar-dBus-GTsang-Ru-bZhi) including the central Tibet cities and valleys of Lhasa, Yarlung, Shigatse, and Gyantse; and East Tibet or Lower Tibet—Dokham(Amdo and Kham, sMad-mDo-Khams-sGang-Drug). Eastern Tibet is traditionally divided into the regions of Kham and Amdo, and these are now incorporated into parts of Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu, and Yunnan provinces.

In recent years, investigations by Western scholars in Tibet have become possible. Several Western anthropologists have gone to western and central Tibetan nomadic areas to conduct field research and have published reports on social life and the economic conditions

of western Tibetan nomads (Pala)① and central Tibetan nomads (Namtsho).② However, very little information has come forth on the nomads of eastern Tibet. For this reason I selected the nomads of eastern Tibet as the object of my research.

Eastern Tibet is occupied by various groups of pastoral nomads or drokba, among whom the Washul Sethar (Wa Shul Seda) are one of the most notorious nomadic groups. They are also sometimes known as Golog Sethar (Mgo-Log-gSer-Thar).

The term "golog" literally means "heads on backward" but it is used here symbolically to mean "handsome, warlike, and independent rebels." Western researchers who traveled to the region have left a number of descriptions of the nomads. The American explorer Joseph R. Rock described them thus: "Such hostile and unfriendly people I have never met anywhere in the world: it seems that a smile never crosses their coarse features."③ Pamela Nightingale writes, "The Ngolo Setas tribesmen belong to that other Tibet which few Europeans have penetrated, the Tibet of primitive herds-men of high plateaus far removed from the civilization of Lhasa and the settlements of the valleys."④

Those who have read the book Tibetan Venture by Andre Guibaut (1947) may recall an area inhabited by the Washul Sethar Tibetan nomads. The authors of the book were two Frenchmen who wanted to discover and map the source of the Tong River (now called Dam He).

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① Melvyn C. Goldstein and Cynthia M. Beall, *Nomads of Western Tibet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

② Graham E. Clarke, "China's Reforms of Tibet and Their Effects on Pastoralism," Institute of Development Studies Discussion Paper 237 (1986).

③ Galen Rowell, "The Nomads of China's West," *National Geographic* 161, no. 2 (1982): 244-433.

④ Andre Guibault, "Introduction," in *Tibetan Venture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

They carded out a second expedition to the home of the Ngolo-Seta tribes in eastern Tibet in 1940. However, during their trip, one of them, Louis Victor Liotard, was killed in an ambush by Washul Sethar tribesmen on September 30, 1940. Teichman[①] notes that this area, in common with the other nomad areas to its north, was a land closed both to Chinese and foreigners and one of the least known areas of Asia. Rockhill said, "the Golok [including Washul Sethar] are the most interesting but unfortunately the least known of the tribes. "[②] The writer Dorje Zodba referred to all the Golog including the people of this area as robbers (Combe 1926, 107). The nomads of Washul Sethar are known for their independence, for their ferocity, for their unity in conflicts, and for the threat they posed to traders who passed through their territory. Until the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) and the Republican period (1912-1949) the local governments of Qinghai and Sichuan provinces had never exercised any control over the Washul Sethar; even the Tibetan local government could not control this region. They were known in the Chinese language as "wild barbarians" (yefan) and their district was described as "the region beyond the boundaries" (hua wai zhi yu). The Washul Sethar have remained isolated up to the present day and little is known of them in the outside world.

Grain, tea, and salt are essential for the Washul Sethar, just as they are for other Tibetan pastoralists, and they obtain those goods through exchanges with farmers. In the past, such dealings were not always friendly or even businesslike, since the nomads also conducted raids on the local villages and on traders traveling through the region.

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① Eric Teichman, *Travels of a Consular Officer in Eastern Tibet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), 77.

② G. A. Combe, *A Tibetan on Tibet* (Kathmandu, Nepal: Ratna PustakBhandar, 1975), originally published in London in 1926.

Tibetans have traditional tales of the fearlessness and roughness of the Washul Sethar, who are notorious in part for their robberies. Like the Golog of Amdo, they set great store by raiding and other martial activities as a chance to display individual courage. If they do not become lamas, the men of the tribe are all expected to be brave or else be looked down upon by their own people. However, they draw a firm distinction between robbery as part of a raid or a retaliatory strike, and theft from fellow tribe members or from people under the tribe's protection. Open robbery is supported and praised, but stealing is strictly punished, as it is considered the most shameful action.

In a settled community such as my hometown Ganzi, a village that attacked its neighbor was very vulnerable to retaliation. But a group of nomads such as the Washul Sethar, who have no fixed homestead to protect, move constantly from place to place, and own fast animals such as horses that can quickly carry people and possessions to remote locations, is well equipped to supplement its income with raids.

There is little information on the social structure and economic conditions of the Washul Sethar in the early travelers' reports. This paper will present an introduction to the Washul Sethar nomadic pastoralists, describing the salient features of their traditional social structure and lifestyle, and their life after recent socialist reforms. This introduction is based on my own firsthand field research in the area, carried out during the almost eight years when I lived with the nomads of Washul Sethar.

The nomadic pastoralists of Washul Sethar live about 400 miles north of the Sichuan-Tibet east-west road located between Qinghai and Sichuan. Now they live in one county (xian) of Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in the western region of Sichuan. Traditionally Sethar encompasses an area of roughly 11, 500 square kilometers.

These nomads raise yak, sheep, and horses, and do not engage in any farming. Over 80 percent of their livestock are yak and only 15 to 20 percent are sheep. They differ in this way from the nomads of western Tibet who raise sheep and goats as their main livestock.

The Sethar region is also one of the highest and coldest regions of eastern Tibet, at an altitude of between 4, 000 and 5, 000 meters above sea level. It is beyond the altitude limit for farming areas, even though the Sethar pastureland is close to farming settlements such as Ganzi, Brago, and Aba. The extremely high altitude and bitter climate of Washul Sethar have effectively precluded agriculture as an economic alternative, even with modem technology. The temperatures reach thirty to forty degrees below zero during the long winter. There are freezing temperatures for eight months out of twelve, from October to May, and even during the growing season, from May to September, snow, hailstorms, and evening frosts are common, and there are no absolutely frost-free periods during the year. Due to the short growing season, the fierce summer hailstorms, and the intense cold and frost, nomadic pastoralism continues to flourish in Washul Sethar, since the nomadic lifestyle is not endangered by any agricultural competitors. This is unlike other well-known traditional nomadic areas such as those in Iran, Turkey, and Africa, where farmers have encroached on nomadic pastureland, forcing some to migrate and find work in the nonpastoral economy.

The Sethar are in one county in Sichuan province including four districts and seventeen xiang (sub-county areas). But the Serba districts and their five xiang do not belong to what is traditionally Washul Sethar.

Traditional Social Structure

Before 1960, there were about 5,340 households and 21,900 persons dispersed among over seventy local territorial camps and groups. Like many pastoral societies elsewhere, the Washul Sethar have a complex sociopolitical organization which unites thousands of households and widely separated encampments (Ru-sKor) into broad groups (Tshoba). Various words are used for groups: the terms tshoba, Shog-Khag, Ruba, and Deba all refer to the same group. Literally, Tshoba means group, and *ba* is a masculine suffix; Shog is a section or division, and Khag means part; deba literally means co-villager or local group of a territory. The most common term in the Washul Sethar region is Tshoba. They also use the term Ru-sKor, but the sense of this term is slightly different from that of tsho-ba. The Ru-sKor is a smaller unit than the Tshoba, but larger in size than the family. In this region ru-kor is used to refer to a pastoral economic unit-the people who herd livestock together, a unit made up of from five or so tens of households together. I gloss Ru-sKor as "encampment" or "circle."

In a society that moves frequently, it is impossible for too many households to live together since the resources of a part of the grassland cannot support large numbers of people and animals. On the other hand, families cannot live on their own in the remote wilderness without a wider economic support group. This is why each camp group of Washul Sethar is divided internally into smaller encampments of coresident households, known as Ru-sKor, that we referred to earlier, and that function as economic units for cooperative herding and other productive activities. When unrelated, the households are linked by their complementary economic imbalances: some families are rich in

livestock but poor in work force, while others have an excess of workers but not enough animals to support themselves. The poorer households then work for the wealthier ones, although the two cooperate as equals in other collective activities. Since 1960, mutual aid teams have been set up on the basis of the ru-kor which has made them acceptable to the Tibetan nomads.

Marriage in Washul Sethar is one important way to acquire economic advantage. The economy of Tibetan nomads is self-supporting. The family as a basic economic unit needs enough members to be able to divide into teams to engage in different kinds of activities, such as the herding of sheep, yak, and horses, the raising of other animals, livestock processing, and trade. Extended family households provide the benefits of economy through shared expenses, labor, security, and companionship so the addition of children is welcomed to increase the work force. Women are the main producers and they have high value because of their ability to have children, although they do not get involved in business, war, carrying loads, or religious activities. Accordingly, some of the women never marry and spend their lives in their parental home. If they become mothers, they expect only a few animals and occasional aid from the child's father. A number of children are born outside marriage as a result of this system, but these children are accepted by the society, and some even become the heads of their camp groups. The family is extended among the Washul Sethar where size not only depends on economic interest, but also on obligations for military association and trade over a vast and sparsely populated area. A small family would find it difficult to deal with the many natural calamities and sudden dangers. Thus the families of Washul Sethar frequently have extended lateral ties between siblings and different generations. A family consists of a man, his wife, his unmarried daughters and their children, and his sons and

their wives and children, since the sons bring their wives to their father's home. Each couple has a separate tent in the Ru-sKor, but they share the livestock and often act together. Most Washul Sethar families have more than six members, and about 20 percent of them have more than ten members. A Tsho ba can have from ten to thirty Ru-sKor or encampments, and will have a number of different *us*, a term that here can mean clan or lineage. These local lineages can be the same as tsho-ba or overlap between different Ttshoba. The *tsho-ba* are named, and the names are taken from local territorial features, such as rivers, mountains, place names, or even stories. I gloss these territorial units as "camp groups. "Each camp group has well-defined rights to a certain territory of grazing land. The sense of territorial rights is very strong among the Washul Sethar. Young herdsmen patrol the grassland, and incursions by other gangs or their animals may lead to skirmishes and casualties. Such incidents still happen. Members of the group are not allowed to sell, buy, or give away any part of the public grassland, and they even need permission from the camp group to rent it out. The largest camp groups consist of between 100 and 400 households, while the smallest have between twenty and forty households. Some of these are further divided into two sub-camp groups called *tod* and *mad*, meaning "upper" and "lower"

The members of camp groups come together only at certain times of the year for festivals, religious creeds, and fairs. The camp groups' sizes depend on the area of grassland and this was originally decided by the size of a display of armed force or power-a matter of how many horses, men, and guns there were. This may be a reason the Washul Sethar nomads traditionally like to keep horses and guns although these items do not have as much economic value as yak or sheep. It is also a reason for the frequent fighting between different camp groups over grassland.

The over seventy camp groups in the larger union or tribe were traditionally known as the Washul Sethar. The union was divided into two subcategories, the "inner" and "outer" camp groups. The inner (Nang) groups included those who were descended from a common ancestor, as contrasted with the outer (Phyir) groups whose members came from different places and did not boast a common ancestor. The inner groups were considered the core of the union since their members descended from the founding ancestors. These groups were called *gur*, their symbol being a white tent. The outer camp groups were divided into four sections called Gur-dKar-Po-Chen-bZhi, that is, the four main ropes of the white tent.

The strength of the idea of descent as conveyed by the "bone" or *rus*, the male line, is one of the most singular traits of these nomadic people. Almost every Washul Sethar male knows his *rus*. Members of the same *rus* are considered as descended from the same male ancestor, the same patrilineage or clan, and are not allowed to intermarry. The largest *rus* clan in the area is the Washul. The name of the Rus line given to their group recalls their earliest male ancestor, Wase Skyabs, whose strength and exploits in myth are linked to one Buddhist scripture, Ta-drin Wachi. Hence the name Washul is for the patrilineage. There are thirteen generations from the founding ancestor Wase Skyabs to the most recent Washul chief (in 1950), Rinzen Dondmp.

The history of the lineage is as follows. According to Tibetan oral tradition, the Dong were one of the six original Tibetan clans. The Dong divided into eighteen clans of which the Washul is one. According to the legend, the Dogsa had four sons. the first three of whom died. The fourth became sick and the Bon-po Lama was sent for. He read the scripture called in Sanskrit Ta-drin Wachi over the boy, and the boy was saved. In recognition the boy was called Washul

after the name of the scripture. Since then the whole lineage has called itself the Washul. At the time, six or seven hundred years ago, they lived in the area around Kokonor Lake. According to oral tradition, in the fourth generation there were again four brothers, Gepan, Getse, Gegyal, and Wan De Jiao. To reach richer grasslands they moved south to the Dokog River (which now forms the border between Qinghai and Sichuan provinces.

During the Yuan dynasty an increasing number of Mongols came to Qinghai. The herdsmen ancestors of the Washul group left the Kokonor Lake region and moved their camps southward to the Dokog River. They finally settled around the Dokog River and stayed there for around one hundred years until the ninth generation. During the early Qing dynasty there were again three brothers, one of whom was named Washul Shia ja da. The main group moved to better grasslands, but because of the frequent moves and the constant warfare, some groups split off and went off on their own, eventually settling in places such as present-day Aba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Nyarong, Dawu, Baiyu, Brago, Lithang, and Hongyuan. The main group moved to Sethar, where they live today.

However, the scattered members of the Washul lineage did not forget their original clan, for even after several hundred years, they still took Washul as their first name, as in Washul Rosa, Washul Choskor, and so on. Members of this clan have also scattered into other wider territorial camp groups and have become core and close kin of the wider camp groups' union that forms Washul. They thus exist in different camps and provide a point of unity in tribal structure. Only men of the Washul clan can be chiefs of the tribe or "union group" of Washul Sethar. Different local segments of a clan are found in different ru-kor or tsho-ba, that is, in the local lineages. The name of a group such as Washul Sethar refers to both the Ru-sKor, the

encampment, and the Tshoba, or group camp name. Hence we have Washul Rosa and Washul Choskhor as names of groups that combine both features. The Washul Sethar clans are examples of a patrilineal system. Many camp groups, even if they live far away from each other, are linked by commonclan membership.

Until modern times, clans have had strong functional and political significance. In the event of disputes between members of different clans, people allied themselves with those who came from the same clan. This was particularly the case during periods of warfare. Clan or patrilineal descent bonds often united members of the same local groups. Externally, the clan seems to have been effective because it enabled local lineage segments to call on ever-increasing support when faced with disputes over use of grassland. However, this system tended to break down if members of many different clans migrated into Sethar from different places such as Ganzi, Aba, and Nyarong. These were incorporated as "outside" Washul groups into the one centralized unified chiefdom of Washul Sethar which represented the "inner" clans. The territrial segments, the Tshoba or wider camp groups, had further everyday political or organizational significance.

The Washul Sethar union camp groups had no special police force for crime, nor did they have courts or special civil agencies formally responsible for resolving disputes. All the same, they had a wider political life and organization. The union or alliance of the over seventy separate camp groups and their " union" had customary procedures for making decisions and resolving disputes, ways and means of creating and maintaining social order and coping with social disorder.

The main function of this larger group was to elect the head of the tribal union and to appoint the successor to the hereditary chief. The

head had to be a person of an inner Washul clan, and also had to be recognized as such and supported as leader by most of the heads of the over seventy camp groups. In Sethar, the "union head" was called dPon-Chen, meaning "great official." He was assisted by two other bLon-po or "ministers," as well as one very powerful Lha-dpon, or "god-official," who worked with him. Although the union head had a higher rank or authority than the others, when he decided an issue with a direct bearing on all the camp groups he had to hold meetings for all the heads of the separate camp groups to discuss the decisions.

Second, the "union" organized military forces to protect the interests of the tribes. This was an extremely important function of the alliance. The role of the union included military organization.

Third, it mediated or attempted to settle fights and disputes, including blood feuds among the tribes. This was a common function of the alliance.

Fourth, it was responsible for the organization of annual religious festivals and associated activities.

The nomads of Washul Sethar are a turbulent people. Like the Khampa or the Golog, they were easily roused to violence when there was a dispute over animals, water rights, or pastures, or when husbands discovered adultery. In those cases, the men had the right to challenge the person who wronged them to a fight which was usually accepted. From childhood, the males of the Washul Sethar were encouraged to settle their conflicts by fighting, but their system of justice was very different from that of other ethnic groups. Not every dispute resulted in violence nor did every challenge end in the death of one or both combatants. It was customary that if a man killed someone, he was not punished but had to compensate for the price of the life. A chief called Jod-dPon acted as an intermediary between the murderer and the victim's kin. Although he had no formal political

power, he was generally an elder respected by the people. He tried to persuade the two parties to accept compensation instead of a blood vengeance, and to determine the price of the life. He succeeded in most cases, since the nomads believed that it would be unkind to execute the murderer. According to the traditional customary law of Washul Sethar, there were fifteen different prices for different categories of lives, and a distinction was made between a man's life and a woman's life.

If both parties to the dispute were still unwilling to come to terms, the Jod-dPon chief had no authority to force them to do so. In this case, there was yet another way of peacefully resolving disputes. This was through oaths. Under this system both persons had to make an oath in the face of the incarnate lama or god. Generally nobody had the courage to break an oath that was made in the face of an incarnate lama, because all the nomads of Washul Sethar had a strong faith in the Buddhist religion.

Religion

As with other nomadic pastoral groups of Tibet, the Washul Sethar placed great emphasis on the worship of ancient mountain gods who had been assimilated into the Buddhist pantheon. Almost every camp group had its own mountain god, and before any important action was started these were appealed to with the recitation of prayers, offering of butter, lamps, the playing of music, and the firing of guns around the mountain. One mountain god was called Brong-ri (which means wild yak mountain), and was common to all of the Washul Sethar. It was said that the nomads were like wild horses when they fought with weapons, but in front of the sacred mountain god they were like obedient puppies. The mountain god played a role

in unifying the thoughts and actions of all the members of the tribe. In Washul Sethar, before carrying out any important action, such as fighting and robbery, all the members of the tribe, young, old and women alike, would gather around the mountain to offer sacrifices to the god. Now such gatherings have also become an important festival and fair for the nomads with dancing, meetings, and trading.

The Washul Sethar herdsmen believed that a tribe without a monastery was incomplete. There were twenty-four monasteries and more than 3, 300 lamas among the over seventy tribes. These monasteries served as centers of culture, education, and religion, and also operated as market centers. People gathered there on religious holidays, and old people no longer able to travel with the herds lived in the precincts of these monasteries. The monasteries were also used as courts by the herdsmen to settle outstanding lawsuits. Then they would make a vow to explain their cases truthfully in front of the lamas and the gods, and the case would be settled.

The Washul Sethar ruled through two systems of chiefdom, one secular with the dPon-Chen (great official) as the leader, and the other theocratic with officials always known as dPon-Lha. The latter were responsible for civil administration and religious affairs. The structure was said to have been inherited from the military structure of the old Tibetan kingdom founded by the Srong-bTsan-sGanm-Po regime. For every thousand households this had a senior Bon spirit medium called Lha-dPon-Po and a junior Bon spirit medium called Lha-Pa for each combat group. They both were responsible for offering prayers, but there was a division of labor between them: the former presided over all sorts of rites of worship on important occasions, while the latter simply prayed for help in vanquishing the enemy when the occasion arose. Later, when tribal alliances emerged, each of the groups had one hereditary dPon-Lha to preside over the rites of

worship, while each of the tribes under it had one Lha-Pa. This pattern was maintained in the tribe of Washul until 1960. Lha-Pa differed from lamas in that they mostly supported themselves through their own labor and mixed with the tribesmen in their productive and communal activities. Easy to approach, they were welcomed by the populace and possessed a certain amount of prestige. The titles and offices of the dPon-Lha and Lha-Pa were hereditary, and neither wore the patched robes of the Buddhist monk or lived in a lamasery. Rather, they lived and acted the way any others would and there was nothing to distinguish them as hereditary priests, spirit mediums, or witches of the Bon religion. Only when war or other important occasions arose would they step out to perform their duties. The gods they served were chiefly mountain gods. In Washul the dPon-Lha claimed themselves to be descendants of the god-mountain of Brong-ri. This was why the local herdsmen supported them, declaring that this was because the Washul dPon-Lha's complexion was purplish, since that was also the color of the holy mountain. Religious activities of the dPon-Lha were centered on praying to the god-mountain for the safety of the groups and the flourishing of the herds. Thus they were seen as having a direct effect on the livelihood and productivity of the herdsmen. The dPon-Lha also presided over the annual rites of saluting the gods before the mountain. In earlier times this called for sacrificing large numbers of oxen and sheep. Later, with the introduction and spread of Buddhism, such offerings were replaced by smoke sent up from the foot of the mountain. On the day of the ceremony members of all the tribes gathered there, paying calls on each other and providing entertainment, feasting, and celebrating as on any festival. This was intended to renew and reaffirm the alliance as well as to celebrate the harvests. By doing so they followed ancient traditions for dispelling suspicion and eliminating discord which had

arisen during the year and thus could consolidate their alliance and unity.

The dPon-Lha also took part in tribal warfare. It was reported that long ago a war broke out between the Washul tribe and the Black Water group or tribe living in Aba. In order to subjugate the enemy, the Washul dPon-Lha led his people in building a white tower for ritual performances. From that time on it is said that the Black Water tribe never harassed them again. Another myth is as follows. Once, when a headman of Nyarong initiated a feud with the tribe, the Washul dPon-Lha immediately invoked the divine infantry and cavalry from the Brong-ri god-mountain to help and put him to rout. Each time before the tribesmen went on raids against other tribes, rites were held to pray to the holy mountain to confer courage and strength on the warriors and to protect them in combat. These rituals were also presided over by the dPon-Lha. All these showed the important role the dPon-Lha undertook in military affairs.

Before 1960, the Lha-Pa served mostly among the camp group tribes as a spirit medium between the gods and man, often relaying what the gods had said. When the Lha-Pa did so, complex rituals were held. First, he would enter a different state of consciousness with the help of various drugs, to show that his soul had separated from his body and gone to heaven to invite various gods hostile to the group to descend among the herdsmen. Almost every Lha-Pa used alcohol to achieve the effect.

Besides liquor, the Lha-Pa also used the smoke from cypress timber as a kind of drug. Once under the effect of these narcotics, the Lha-Pa would enter a trancelike state; his limbs would become rigid, his eyes would stare, and he would begin to dance in a frenzied manner, said to be patterned on the movements of both hostile and friendly gods who had descended to the altar. Then he would fall

silent, his eyes glazed, while the saliva would froth around his mouth. The silence would last for quite a while. Then all of a sudden it would be broken by a piercing shriek from the spirit medium announcing that all the guardian angels of the tribe had entered him, and that from then on what he spoke would be the words of the spirits. Such performances of the Lha-Pa spirit mediums are similar to those of other shamans.

The traditional use of liquor in ancient Tibetan religion is difficult to establish from records. It was said, for example, dating master Tsong-kha-pa's pilgrimage to the High God Mountain, that the god-mountain was displeased because of his abstention from liquor dictated by the Buddhist religion and caused his feet to be pricked by the thorny undergrowth when he was crossing the sGrol-Ma Mountain Range. The wounds immediately became inflamed and swollen, dripping blood and oozing pus. Crippled by the pain, he was unable to continue his journey. This tale sheds much light on the indispensability of liquor in the ancient religion.

The Effects of Reforms on Pastoralism

The traditional nomadic structure of Washul Sethar ended in 1960. Like the agriculturalists, the Sethar pastoralists have undergone many changes since that time. From 1960, mutual aid teams had been set up based on the Ru-sKor, so they were readily accepted by Tibetan nomads. First, livestock was divided equally among individual households. Then people formed cooperatives in which they held individual rights over the animals and engaged in exchange labor, the system known as Phan-Rogs-Tshogs-Pa or *Rogs-Res-Tshogs-Pa*, meaning "group of mutual aid" or "mutual assistance team." At least on the surface the system was similar to the traditional Ru-sKor

group and there were no noticeable differences in the social structure. The nomads adapted to this new system without problems as the family continued to be the basic productive unit; there was exchange labor with several households which were organized into "mutual aid groups" and shared pastureland. They cooperated in herding and trading; but each household still owned its own livestock and sold or traded its products as it wished, independently of the others in the group.

During that time, organized religion and monasteries were abolished and a growing number of lamas returned home to take part in economic production. But religion continued as a private practice. Not long after the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, all the grassland and livestock were collectivized and the nomads worked under a system which allotted to each of them the same benefits regardless of the amount of work. In Chinese this was known as "the big iron rice bowl." Following the harvest, the work points were counted and each household received about the same amount of crops.

As a consequence, the nomads reduced their level of work under the collective production system. One of the other major changes was that during this period the nomads lost their religious freedom and their right to trade; both activities were regarded as the "restoration of capitalism" and were completely prohibited. This deeply affected the nomads who rebelled and broke down most of the cooperative teams for a time. This was only one side of the issue. On the other, labor was centralized and unified, and it was possible to conduct larger-scale capital construction such as the building of roads and new settlements for herdsmen. These improvements greatly contributed to the growth in the circulation of commodities occurring nowadays.

After the reform of 1980, all the grassland and livestock were redistributed to individual households according to the size of the

family, and the production teams were disbanded. Finally, fixed prices for the sale of goods were abolished and people became free to sell their products again, either to the state or on the open markets. One of the most notable aspects of these 1980 reforms was the reinstatement of a considerable amount of religious freedom. The nomads were free to practice their religion as they chose.

The new economic and cultural policies implemented by the Chinese government in Tibet after 1980 produced a major reverse transformation of the Washul Sethar region. The nomads' economy immediately reverted to the traditional household system of production and management. It also allowed them to rebuild the foundations of their traditional way of life and openly express their commitment to their ancestral values and customs. Nowadays life in this region is closer to the traditional ideal than at any other time since the 1960s, with the nomads' value system being strongly associated with the grassland, mountain gods, and camp group institutions.

We cannot say that Washul Sethar will not change in the future. Today more and more nomads are eager to acquire the symbols of status and success such as cars, tractors, wristwatches, tape recorders, and new clothes, and they are willing to trade extra livestock to obtain them. In this way, a growing amount of the nomad's income and access to articles for daily use depends on the market. More and more young nomads go to cities and engage in trade, and more groups of nomads settle near cities and towns to build modern facilities for commercial animal husbandry. The question is how to combine this new commercial economy with traditional beliefs, values, and lifestyles. How will the Washul Sethar nomads' character and traditions be affected by the commercial economy that now flourishes in Tibet? No simple answers exist to these important questions.

Many traditional culture changes have resulted, directly or indirectly, from commercialization. It is clear that the nomads' dependence on markets has increased since decollectivization. There has been construction of roads from most local camp places to rural townships and county headquarters, and from counties to the market centers of eastern Tibet-Dardo (Dar-rTse-mDo, or Kang Ding), there is even regular bus transport. The Chinese, Tibetan, or Hui traders can easily bring grain and other commodities needed by nomads to Washul Sethar nowadays. The nomads can also easily take yak butter, meat, wool, and even live sheep and yak to sell in Dardo or Ganzi market centers. They then use the profits to purchase what they need.

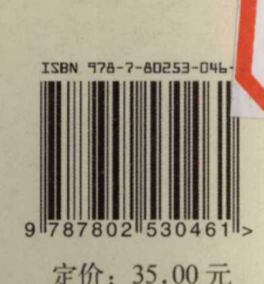
Some nomads who live near the towns or roads like to have private tractors or trucks as symbols of their wealth. The Washul Sethar nomads tend to use spring mattresses, steel stoves, and machines for milking cows. Since they cannot produce these commodities themselves, they have to buy these tools and furniture from the market. Traditionally, the nomads do not like traders, but now they want to be in contact with the traders for these goods.

When I first arrived in Sethar (Seda) in 1969, I heard one story of the 1960s that I did not at first believe: some nomads used their paper money as tent ornaments since they did not know the value of paper money. When the commune gave back shares in livestock and land to nomads in 1980, they obtained paper money from their shares and immediately went to the shops to acquire valuable goods. They did not want to keep the money in their home nor did they want to deposit it in the banks. Nowadays, in the 1990s, more and more nomad people like to keep money and accumulate their funds in expectation of the fall commodities fair which is held each year in Washul Sethar. Over ten thousand nomads then come to the fair that has over a thousand traders who come from different distant places.

These changes do not mean that Washul Sethar nomads have accepted the values of commercial economy. On the contrary, many nomads have kept their strongly traditional values and are unwilling to sell animals, though they have more of them than is necessary to support family life. But commoditization and trading skills are likely to increase in importance in the future as the nomads gain familiarity with the growth of new markets in Tibet.



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ISBN 978-7-80253-046-
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定价：35.00元